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LAND AND PEOPLES OF THE KASAI









THE OLD BUEMIE RELATING THE LEGENDS OF HIS TRIBE.

# LAND AND PEOPLES OF THE KASAI

BEING A NARRATIVE OF A TWO YEARS' JOURNEY  
AMONG THE CANNIBALS OF THE EQUATORIAL  
FOREST AND OTHER SAVAGE TRIBES OF  
THE SOUTH-WESTERN CONGO

BY

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WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS AND EIGHT FULL-  
PAGE COLOUR PLATES AND A MAP

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## INTRODUCTION

I OUGHT to say a few words as to how the expedition I have attempted to describe in the following pages came to be undertaken, and why the task of describing its wanderings has fallen upon me.

In the summer of 1907 I was contemplating a journey in the Sahara Desert, a country with which I had some previous acquaintance, when the trouble between France and Morocco led the French Government to decide that the state of affairs in the Sahara was too unsettled to admit of its allowing travellers to wander there unescorted, and, there being already sufficient to occupy all the troops in that region, it felt itself unable to offer me any soldiers to accompany me. I was accordingly obliged to abandon my expedition, for which most of my preparations had been made. I was determined to go somewhere, however, and Mr. T. A. Joyce, of the British Museum, suggested that I should visit the Congo, in the natives of which country he was keenly interested. He introduced me to Mr. Emil Torday, the Hungarian traveller, with whom he had collaborated in the writing of numerous papers about the Congo natives for the publications of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and Mr. Torday invited me to join him upon an expedition which he was about to undertake in the Kasai basin of the Congo Free State.

I at once agreed to accompany him, delighted at the opportunity of visiting equatorial Africa, and of seeing something of the life of its primitive inhabitants. Mr. Torday had already studied the peoples who dwell in the south-western portion of the Congo State around the Kwilu River, and he desired to make an ethnographical survey of the natives of the Kasai and Sankuru basins, at the same time making extensive collections for the ethnographical department of the British Museum, and, if possible, of visiting the hitherto unexplored country between the Kasai and its tributary the Loange, which is inhabited by the Tukongo, a people so hostile to the white man that their tract of country had never been traversed by a European.

The Kasai is the largest of those mighty waterways which form the tributaries of the Congo. Rising not far from the sources of the Zambezi, it flows northward into Congo territory, turning almost at right angles to the west at the point where it receives the waters of the Sankuru, and falling into the Congo about 140 miles above Stanley Pool. The Kasai is navigable for river steamers up to Wissmann Falls, above its confluence with the Lulua, and these vessels ply upon the Sankuru to a point a little above Lusambo. Upon one or two of the lesser streams of the district, such as the Kwilu (itself a great river), the Inzia, and the Lubefu, small steamers are employed. The trade of this country was in the hands of the Kasai Company, which has established numerous factories on the banks of the principal rivers and in the interior. As no coinage had in 1907 been introduced in

the Kasai district, Mr. Torday knew that we should require very large quantities of trade goods, such as cloth, salt, iron bars, knives, &c., which passes for money among the natives, and in order to avoid the waste of money which would result if we purchased these commodities in Europe and then found many of them unsaleable in Africa, he approached the Kasai Company with the request that we might buy such goods as we required at the factories from the stock kept by the Company for the purchase of ivory and rubber. In this way we should be sure of obtaining the goods the people of each locality we visited really required. The Kasai Company kindly agreed to this proposal, and also consented to allow our baggage and the collections we were to make to be conveyed in their steamers. The Government of the Congo, which had been requested by the authorities of the British Museum to further the interests of our expedition, and which is ever ready to help forward the efforts of the scientist or sportsman, agreed to give us special facilities for collecting natural history specimens, and to allow the cases we addressed to the Museum to come out of the Congo unopened by the customs' officials. While Mr. Torday was busily engaged in making the arrangements necessary for our journey, Mr. Norman H. Hardy, a well-known painter of native life, offered to accompany us for the first six months of our journey, and as Mr. Torday was particularly anxious to secure reliable coloured pictures of the natives among whom he was to work, he gladly agreed to this suggestion, and Mr. Hardy became the third member of our party. While Mr. Torday was

making his investigations in the field, Mr. T. A. Joyce had been engaged upon library work in Europe, and they have collaborated in publishing the scientific results of the journey, some of which are not yet fully worked up, although their monograph on the Bushongo tribe has recently been published.

During the whole journey I carefully kept a personal diary, in which I described the country we passed through and the various adventures which befel us in our wanderings. Upon our return home several people suggested to me that I should write some account of the expedition which might prove of interest to the general reader. Mr. Torday was anxious that I should do this, for his own time would be too fully occupied in working up his scientific notes to allow him sufficient leisure for the writing of a book of travel.

When I returned to Europe, however, I was in a very bad state of health, for I had broken a bone in my right hand some nine months previously, which I had not been able to have set, and which necessitated my carrying my arm in a sling for a couple of months on reaching England, and also the frequent fevers of the equatorial forest and the period of starvation through which we passed during the latter part of 1908 had told seriously upon my constitution. I was accordingly unable to undertake any work for a considerable time after my return from Africa. This must be my excuse for publishing now a book relating to a journey which came to an end in 1909. I would ask my readers to be so kind as to remember that I make no pretensions to literary merits. I have for some years



led the life of a wanderer, and it has been my good fortune to witness many strange scenes, to come in contact with many remarkable peoples, and to visit districts many of which have never hitherto been described in the English language. I only regret that I do not possess the literary skill necessary to do justice to them. Had there been any other member of our party who stayed with the expedition during the whole of its sojourn in Africa, doubtless the task of narrating our adventures would have been very much better fulfilled ; as it is, with Mr. Torday busily engaged in scientific work, and Mr. Hardy absent during the last part of our journey, I am the only person upon whom this task can devolve.

As my readers will observe, this book has no political motive ; it is intended merely to be a record of our journey, and they will find in the following pages nothing about the atrocities which we hear have been perpetrated in many parts of the Congo. The reason for this is that we came across no brutality on the part of white men towards natives during our journey in the Kasai district. When I returned from Africa I made this statement to a representative of the Press, with the result that I aroused such indignation on the part of certain persons that I almost feel I ought to apologise for my misfortune in having no atrocities to describe. As my narrative will show, we lived for practically two years in close contact with the natives, and we were fortunate enough to win the confidence of nearly all the peoples with whom we dwelt, but I was able to obtain no tales of atrocities from them. What goes on in parts of the Congo which I have never visited I am not in a position

to state; I shall only deal with districts which I personally know.

Nor is it my intention to attempt to instruct the Belgians how to govern their new colony—it would take a far wiser head than mine to face the many problems by which they are confronted in the Congo—but I would like to say one word of warning. Let no one imagine that “any sort of man” will do to administer the black man’s country, and that the negro regards every European as a great and wonderful personage. Far from it. The negro judges every white man on his merits, and no one can more quickly distinguish a gentleman from a scapegrace, or a strong man from a weak, than the primitive inhabitants of Central Africa. Let the Belgians, bearing this in mind, do their utmost to induce men of the *best class* to enter the Congo service, and the success of their colonial enterprise should be assured.

As my readers may very possibly wonder how we obtained a great deal of the information relating to tribal customs, &c., to which I shall allude, I may here give some idea of how Mr. Torday carried on his investigations. In the first place he never accepted an item of information concerning the natives imparted to him by a white man, but only recorded what was told to him by members of the tribe concerned. Secondly, he used always to select as his informants from among the natives men who had been as little as possible in contact with the European, and who were, therefore, still in a primitive state of culture themselves; very often he obtained his data from chiefs. Thirdly, a working knowledge of eight native languages

enabled him almost always to dispense with the services of that very unsatisfactory person an interpreter, and also allowed him to pick up from the natives a lot of information and some legends which he was able to overhear when they were being related by the people among themselves, and not directly addressed to him. An acquaintance with Chikongo and Chituba, two bastard languages (both very easy to learn) which serve as a medium for trade between the various tribes, will perfectly well enable one to travel in the Kasai district unaccompanied by an interpreter speaking English or French, but a knowledge of the real languages of the tribes is essential to any one desiring to undertake serious ethnological researches, and this knowledge Mr. Torday possesses. A long study of the negro, a great liking for the primitive savage, and a keen insight into his character have endowed him with a way of gaining the confidence of the negroes, and of becoming popular with them, which enabled him to visit in safety places where a less experienced man might easily have been murdered, and to which must be attributed the success which Mr. Torday obtained in extracting much valuable information from the natives—information they would never have imparted to a man they did not both trust and like. As regards the results of our journey, I gather from the remarks made by scientists at the conclusion of Mr. Torday's lecture before the Royal Geographical Society in March, 1910, that they are considered satisfactory, while the collections made for the British Museum are very extensive. Unfortunately lack of space prevents the exhibition there of many of the articles collected, but any of my readers who care to look

in the Ethnographical Gallery may find some good specimens (a small part of the collection) of Bushongo wood-carving and embroidery to which I shall allude in my narrative.

I feel that I ought to say something about the photographs which illustrate my pages. With the exception of the picture of the statue facing page 209 (for which I am indebted to Mr. Joyce) and that of the buffalo head on page 248, they are all reproduced from our own negatives. Some of them, I know, lack clearness; but if my readers will remember that the films were used in a terribly damp climate, that near to the Equator the rainy season continues practically the whole year round, and that for twenty consecutive months we lived under canvas and, accordingly, lacked favourable opportunities for developing our photographs, some allowance may be made for the shortcomings of certain of my illustrations. We took a large number of photographs, but unfortunately many of the most important of them (particularly of those taken in the forest) were ruined by the heat and damp of that most trying climate.

In bringing my introductory remarks to a close, I wish to thank the Directors of the Kasai Company for the facilities they gave us, to which allusion has been made, and also the many employees of that Company who showed us kindness during our journey; the Belgian Government and those of its officials who speeded us on our way; the Royal Geographical Society for permission to reproduce the map which illustrated Mr. Torday's lecture in the *Geographical Journal* for July 1910; and all those natives

who received us well, and to whom we owe the information we collected, particularly Kwete Peshanga Kena, the king of the Bushongo, and Okitu, a Batetela chief. I would like, also, to offer my heartiest thanks to Mr. T. A. Joyce for being the cause of my joining the expedition, and to Mr. Hardy for the care he has taken to produce coloured pictures for this book. Lastly, let me express my gratitude to Mr. Torday for allowing me to accompany him, for the assistance he has given me in compiling my manuscript, and for his pleasant companionship during two eventful years, in the whole course of which we never had the semblance of a dispute.

M. W. HILTON-SIMPSON.



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# LAND AND PEOPLES OF THE KASAI

## CHAPTER I

### FROM THE COAST TO THE SANKURU

WE left England on October 1, 1907, and proceeded to Matadi by a vessel belonging to the Compagnie Belge Maritime du Congo. A journey to the mouth of the Congo by one of the three-weekly mail steamers from Antwerp is not one that would be undertaken solely for amusement; a few hours at La Palice (the port of La Rochelle in the Bay of Biscay), Santa Cruz de Teneriffe, Dakar in Senegal, Sierra Leone, and sometimes at Grand Bassam on the French Ivory Coast, are the only breaks in the monotony of a twenty-one days' voyage, which in itself cannot be expected to be particularly cheerful when one remembers that the majority of the passengers are going out to spend three years' service as officials or employees of trading companies in one of the most unhealthy climates of the world. As a rule, I believe, the voyage to the Congo is not marked by any particular incident, while the monotony of the journey home is only broken by the temporary gloom cast by the all too frequent burials at sea. Our own journey to Matadi

was devoid of any kind of interest, and the days dragged on with painful slowness until, long before any land had appeared in sight, the muddy appearance of our bath water informed us that we were approaching the mouth of the Congo. The great volume of water issuing from the river discolours the sea for many miles, and I am told that the water is quite drinkable at a very considerable distance from land.

There are four ports at which the steamers call in the estuary of the Congo—Banana Point, Boma, Noki, and Matadi. At the first of these our vessel stopped to unload a quantity of cargo for the Dutch House, the oldest of the Congo trading firms, and we spent an hour or two ashore, mainly with the object of exercising the two fox terriers we had brought with us from Europe, exploring the narrow strip of land projecting southwards from the right bank of the river in the form of the fruit from which it takes its name, washed on the one side by the waters of the Congo and on the other by Atlantic surf. There is little to see at Banana, the place consisting solely of the residences of one or two officials, the establishment of the Dutch House, and a sanatorium, whither patients are sent from Boma and Matadi to be braced up by sea air after severe attacks of fever, though the number of mangrove swamps which intersect the narrow promontory do not give it exactly the appearance of a health resort.

At Boma, situated about fifty-five miles further up the river on the right bank, there is more to be seen, but our time was too much occupied in visiting various officials upon business connected with our journey to allow us to

take more than a cursory glance at the capital of the Independent State of the Congo, with its shops, its bungalows, and its little steam tramway, emblems of civilisation that we were soon to leave far behind us.

There were formalities to be gone through before we could land our baggage and stores in the country and proceed upon our journey. We had to visit the offices of the *État Civile*, where we filled up "matriculation" forms dealing with our ages, occupations, and dates of our parents' birth, and other such matters of great interest to the authorities, and this done we called upon the Vice Governor-General, Monsieur Fuchs, acting in place of the Baron Wahis, who was in Europe. Monsieur Fuchs received us most kindly; he had already been requested from Brussels to do all in his power to help forward our plans, and he readily consented to allow us to introduce into the country sundry prohibited articles, such as arms for an escort, and promised to do his best for us in the matter of granting us permission to shoot game all the year round, to hunt in the reserves, and to shoot elephants. He also told us that, should the necessity arise, we should be provided with an escort of troops, and he informed us that he would issue an order to all the officials in the district of Lualaba-Kasai requesting them to render us all the assistance in their power. The result of our interview with Monsieur Fuchs was that we obtained facilities for collecting natural history specimens which the game laws would otherwise have closed to us, and also our mission was officially recognised by the Government, and we were thus saved endless annoying delays which might have arisen later on if any

up-country official had chosen to have doubts as to our *bona fides*.

Having paid our visits to the officials, we partook of tea with Mrs. Underwood, the wife of Messrs. Hatton and Cookson's agent at Boma. Mr. Underwood, who has recently died upon his return to Europe, had, I think, resided on the Congo longer than any other white man. He was there before the Congo State was founded, and, except for brief periods of leave in Europe, remained there until just before his death in 1910. This gentleman was to arrange for the shipment to England of the many packages for the Museum which we hoped to send down to the coast, and his firm had kindly consented to act as our bankers (for banks did not then exist in the Congo, though I understand one is now to be established), so we had a good deal of business to transact with him before going on board the *Bruxellesville* for the night.

Our ship left Boma at dawn on the following day, so we had little or no time to inspect the town. Shortly after leaving the mouth of the Congo, the woods which had clothed the banks, particularly on the south or Portuguese shore, gave place to open, grassy plains, sparsely studded with trees, and low hills began to appear, which, as one draws near to Noki, rise to a considerable height and extend eastwards to the vicinity of Stanley Pool. Noki is a small Portuguese post on the left bank of the river, from which runs a road to San Salvador, an important town in the interior of Angola, and all the mail steamers call there, but as landing has to be effected in boats, and the place possesses nothing of interest, passengers usually remain on board







THE CONGO AT MATADI



A STREET IN MATADI.

while cargo is discharged. Between Noki and Matadi, the first Congolese post on the left bank of the river, the scenery is extremely fine. The Congo makes a sharp turn to the left at this point, and the stream, flowing through a deep ravine between ranges of rocky hills, is so strong that the bend in the river is known as the Devil's Cauldron. Foam-crested waves break the surface of the waters, and only by hugging the southern shore can small steamers make headway against the current. The port of Matadi, or "The Stones," is built, as its name implies, among the rocks on the left bank of the river. It lies just below the cataracts which render the lower Congo impossible for navigation, and just above the frontier between Angola and the Belgian Congo. At Matadi commences the railway to Stanley Pool, so all the merchandise intended for the interior is unloaded there, and there all the produce of the Congo State is shipped. It is a most unprepossessing place. Intensely hot, owing to its rocky surroundings, it is too much enclosed by hills to receive any cooling breezes from the sea, and there are few trees about the place to afford shelter from the scorching rays of the tropical sun. We were compelled to spend three days at Matadi in order to see to the registration of our guns and rifles, all of which have to be stamped with a Government mark by which they could be identified should we, in defiance of the law, sell them to the natives, and to pass our stores through the customs. We had brought with us several cases of whisky and brandy, sufficient to last us as medical comforts for the whole of our two years' journey. We had had to obtain at Boma special permission to bring this quantity of alcohol into Congolese

territory, for the importation of spirits is very strictly limited, each white man being allowed to receive but three litres of alcohol per month, with the double object of checking excessive drinking among the white residents of the interior, and of preventing strong drink from becoming an article of exchange in trading with the natives. At Matadi these regulations do not hold good, and the natives can purchase wine, &c., at the various stores, for in such close proximity to Portuguese territory, where no such regulations exist, it would be quite impossible to prevent the native from obtaining liquor if he required it.

At Matadi we engaged the only "boy," or personal servant, whom we intended to take with us from the coast, for Torday had determined to recruit our servants from among the uncivilised and simple-minded natives whose country we were to visit, and to have only one or two experienced "boys," who could turn this raw material into useful servants. We found a native of Loango, by name Balo, who was willing to accompany us. For some reason or other, we gave this man the name of Jones, and Jones he remained until he left us in January 1909. He spoke a little French and a word or two of English in addition to the Chikongo dialect, which is the *lingua franca* of the Lower Congo, and we found him an invaluable servant during the early part of our journey.

At last all our preparations had been completed and we were free to depart by the next train for Leopoldville. We were only able to take with us a comparatively small amount of personal baggage owing to the high rate of charges for excess baggage on the railway, fifty centimes

being charged for every kilogramme over the thirty kilos allowed to each first-class passenger; we therefore arranged for our stores and other heavy baggage to be sent on to us as early as possible by goods train, for we should not need either food-stuffs or camp equipment during the ten days or so we intended to stay on the shores of Stanley Pool. These charges for freight as well as the first-class fare of £8 may sound exorbitant for a journey of only about two hundred and forty miles, but it must be remembered that the railway was enormously expensive to build owing to the mountainous character of the country through which it passes, and travelling at the present rates, high as they are, is far cheaper than was the case before the line was completed, when everything had to be carried up from Matadi by native porters. The cost in life when making the railway was enormous—it is said that every kilometre cost one white man's life and every metre the life of a native—but the existence of the line has prevented many a death. In the old days the journey on foot to Stanley Pool took a heavy toll of the white men destined for the far interior. The newly appointed State agent or trader's employee had to march for three weary weeks across a rough and hilly country just after his arrival in Africa, before he had learned to take care of his health in the treacherous Congo climate. He would toil breathless and perspiring to the summit of a hill, and there, in his ignorance, sit down to rest and enjoy the freshness of the breeze, with the result that in many cases he never reached the Pool. Had these hills been situated in the far interior they would have been

much less deadly, but lying at the very commencement of the up-country journey they were a veritable death-trap to the inexperienced traveller. The cataracts of the Congo, which render the existence of a railway necessary, are, I presume, too extensive and the volume of water which pours down them far too great to admit of the possibility of engineering skill being able ever to open the whole river to navigation. What a change could be wrought in the opening up of the country if only steamers could ply between Matadi and the Pool! At present every vessel intended for use on the Upper Congo and its mighty tributaries has to be conveyed in small sections at great expense up the railway and fitted together at Leopoldville or Kinshasa, the result being that the cost of even a very small steamer has become enormous by the time it is ready to be used; and at present the possession of a steamer is a necessity to any individual or company desiring to trade in the vicinity of the great waterways, for transport upon State vessels is very costly; accordingly, so much capital is required to start a commercial enterprise in the interior as to put such undertakings quite beyond the reach of the small company or individual trader. But it is not the object of this book to discuss questions relating to the trade in the Congo, so I will return to the narrative of our journey.

The travelling on the Congo railway is by no means luxurious, the train consisting of one first-class carriage capable of seating twelve persons in chairs, placed six on each side of the vehicle, one second-class carriage with open sides suggestive of a cattle truck and filled to

overflowing with natives attired in every caricature of European dress, and a baggage van. But any one who has not previously taken the journey can soon forget the discomfort and stuffy heat of the railway carriage as he gazes upon the fine scenery through which he passes or marvels at the triumphs of engineering which the line represents. Shortly after leaving Matadi the train ascends a steep gradient and runs along a narrow ledge, cut out of the hill-side, overhanging the precipitous valley of the Congo, through which the mighty river rushes, turbulent and foam-flecked, from the cataracts to the sea. But one sees little of the Congo from the train, for soon the line leaves the river-side, keeping to the south of the valley, and winds in and out among rocky hills or passes through mile upon mile of dense woodland, a foretaste of the impenetrable fastnesses of the equatorial forest; and only when one reaches the shores of Stanley Pool does one return to the banks of the Congo. The night is spent at Thysville, named after Colonel Thys, the engineer who built the railway. There, there is a very decent hotel, maintained by the railway company, where passengers dine and sleep in comfort. But when once Thysville is passed the traveller has left hotels behind him, for he will find none at Leopoldville or beyond. Thysville lies high, and the night air there is chilly; in fact it strikes one as intensely cold when returning home after a long stay in the great heat of the interior, and in the early mornings as a rule the surrounding hills are obscured by a damp mist which gives the place a distinctly unhealthy appearance. The climate, however,

cannot be so bad as one might think, for I believe that the State is about to build a sanatorium there, whither officials who have broken down in health may be sent for a spell of sick leave. Up to Thysville the line rises, but beyond this point it descends to the Pool. Our journey was not marked by any incident worthy of note, excepting that just before arriving at a wayside station our engine refused to face a particularly steep gradient, and we were left waiting on the line for an hour or so while a fresh locomotive was summoned from Thysville, which was, fortunately, not far away. At the numerous little stations natives would come to the train to sell pine-apples and bananas, but these people all belonged to the semi-civilised class of negro who possesses but little interest to any one who wishes to study the African apart from the influence of European manners and customs.

At about three in the afternoon of the second day the train drew up at Kinshasa, on the banks of Stanley Pool, and we alighted. We had arranged to be conveyed from Stanley Pool to Dima, the headquarters of the Kasai Company, in one of the company's steamers, which vessels always stop at Kinshasa to unload their cargo and take up merchandise from the railway, so we did not proceed direct to the rail-head at Leopoldville, but spent a couple of nights in Kinshasa in the house of a Portuguese trader, who lodges such travellers as belong to no company, and therefore have no house to go to, for, as I have said, hotels do not exist in Kinshasa; all the big up-river companies, however, have their forwarding-agents resident there, and these provide lodgings for their other





THE CONGO RAILWAY.



A STOP AT A WAYSIDE STATION.



employees journeying to or from the coast. Kinshasa is but a shadow of its former self. At one time a considerable garrison of native troops was kept there, but these were moved on to Leopoldville after an outbreak of sleeping sickness; then extensive plantations of coffee, &c., were made, but for some reason or other they failed to pay and were abandoned, with the result that the once flourishing settlement of Kinshasa has degenerated into a simple post for the despatch by train of rubber and ivory brought from the interior by steamer, with a white population consisting only of one or two officials connected with the customs, who inspect the exports, a missionary, and the above-mentioned forwarding-agents of companies. Its beautiful shady avenues are deserted, most of its neat brick-built bungalows have fallen into decay, and the many acres of plantations are hardly distinguishable from the surrounding bush. The general air of decadence, combined with the clouds of mosquitoes which infest the place, do not make Kinshasa a particularly desirable place to stay in, so we were not sorry to move on to Leopoldville, where we were to make some anthropological measurements while waiting the arrival of our stores from the coast. At Kinshasa we visited the first really native village we had seen in the Congo, a settlement of the Bateke tribe, situated close to the European residents' houses. These people have been (and I believe still are) most enthusiastic traders, but were not particularly friendly to the white man when Stanley first established the Congo State upon the shores of the Pool. Their village at Kinshasa is extremely

pretty, the quaint grass huts scattered about beneath the shade of the palm and baobab trees forming a picture far more pleasing to the eye, if less suggestive of progress, than the groups of mud dwellings built in imitation of Europeans' bungalows which are to be seen near the wayside stations on the line.

Leopoldville lies upon the shores of Stanley Pool, a few miles to the west of Kinshasa. There are here no hotels, and as the quarters occupied by the agents of Messrs. Hatton & Cookson, who own a considerable trading establishment here, were full up with three Europeans, we were obliged to call upon the Commissioner of the district of Stanley Pool to ask if there was a vacant bungalow in which we could sleep. This gentleman kindly allowed us to occupy two rooms in the buildings used by a company which is building the railway through the Upper Congo to the Great Lakes, situated close to the water's edge. We took our meals with Messrs. Hatton and Cookson's agents. Although Leopoldville is so important a place and is surrounded by an enormous native population, the cost of living there is very great, and fresh meat is so difficult to obtain, owing, I believe, to the ravages of the tsetse fly among the cattle which are kept in the neighbourhood, that the white residents are more dependent upon tinned foods imported from Europe than the traders and officials of most of the remote districts of the interior. In addition to the white officers of the garrison and the numerous Government officials resident at Leopoldville, there are a large number of European engineers in the employ of the Government, whose occupation it is to put

together the steamers brought up the railway in sections and to repair those which have become damaged in their voyages on the Congo and its tributary streams. The Great Lakes Railway Company has several European employees at Leopoldville, and a number of independent traders (for the most part Portuguese) bring up the number of Europeans in Leopoldville to somewhere about 300. The natives, who inhabit numberless villages in the immediate neighbourhood of the settlement, consist for the most part of retired soldiers, or people who have worked in some other capacity for the white man and who have become, in their own opinion at any rate, too civilised to care to return to their primitive homes in the interior. It would almost appear that Leopoldville is situated too close to the cataracts of the Congo, which commence a mile or two to the west of the town at the point where the river flows out of the Pool, and the long-drawn roar of which is continually in one's ears in all parts of the settlement; and in order to prevent vessels approaching the quays of Leopoldville, which have taken a course rather too near to the rapids, from being swept by the stream to certain destruction, it is necessary to keep a small but exceedingly powerful steamer always ready to go to the assistance of a vessel which may seem to be unable to make the shore. I will not weary my readers with an account of the work upon which we were engaged during the fortnight or so that we spent at Leopoldville. It consisted almost entirely in making a large number of anthropological measurements, and in photographing types of natives of the many tribes of which representatives are to be found in this great centre

of European influence. A large number of the people whom we measured were soldiers. The officer commanding the garrison used to daily send down detachments, which were drawn up in line outside the bungalow in which we lived, and one after another the men came up to have the caliper applied to their heads, and to have their photographs taken. I do not think any of them enjoyed it very much, but small rewards in the shape of tobacco usually sent them away smiling. Although this work has, I believe, proved useful, it was not very interesting to do, and when a telegram arrived from Kinshasa informing us that the Kasai Company's steamer had arrived and was in readiness to convey us to Dima, we quickly packed our baggage and started off to go on board her, eager to commence our wanderings in the Kasai.

The *Fumu N'Tangu*, "The Chief of the Sun," an old Chikongo name for the late Herr Greshoff, the Director of the Dutch House, is a stern-wheel steamer, capable of carrying about fifty tons. Upon her upper deck she carries four very small cabins and one rather larger one, in addition to the captain's cabin at the forward end of the deck. On the lower deck, which, when the steamer is loaded, is but a very few inches above the water, are the engines and a cabin for the engineer. Above the upper deck is a good roof of planks, rendering the use of a topee unnecessary even in the heat of the day. The *Fumu N'Tangu* draws very little water, as parts of the Kasai abound in shallows during the dry season. We left Kinshasa at six o'clock on a glorious November morning, and headed northwards across the Pool, the course for steamers lying close along



FISHERMEN ON THE CONGO.



BATEKE VILLAGE, KINSHASA.





the French shore. Owing to the large wooded island known as Bomu, and to the presence of numerous grassy islets and sandbanks, one could get no real view of Stanley Pool from the deck of the steamer; indeed it is only as one approaches the point where the Congo enters it that one gets any idea of the width of the Pool, and even here, as one looks to the southward, one does not see this beautiful stretch of water at its greatest width. From north to south the greatest width is about sixteen miles, and the length of the Pool from east to west about seventeen. In the old days the island of Bomu was a noted haunt of buffaloes, elephants, and numerous herds of hippopotami, but the guns of the Bateke, who shot these animals as food for the white men and the garrison, have long since exterminated them, and save for some crocodiles, and I believe an occasional hippopotamus, the only inhabitants of the island and the sandbanks around it are numerous eagles and waterfowl. On a calm day the waters of Stanley Pool are extremely glassy, notwithstanding the strong stream which flows through it towards the cataracts to the west; but the sudden storms, locally dignified with the name of tornado, which are so frequent in the rainy season, completely change the aspect of the Pool, and not infrequently canoes which are overtaken by them some distance from the shelter of land have the greatest difficulty in reaching a place of safety. The width of the Congo where it flows into Stanley Pool, through a break in a chain of hills some 700 feet high, is about one mile, and as one approaches this point the north shore of the Pool rises abruptly from the water's edge in the form of white cliffs tinged with

red; these are still known as Dover Cliffs, the name given to them by Stanley upon his first descent of the Congo. From Stanley Pool to the mouth of the Kasai the Congo is known as the Channel. In this part of the river there are practically no islands or sandbanks, for the stream runs in a comparatively narrow valley, and is deep; in fact many captains of river steamers will continue their run at night in the channel, a thing which would be impossible among the shallows and sandbanks of the Kasai. The average width of the Congo channel is, I believe, something just under a mile. At first, as one proceeds up the river, its course is bordered on either hand by wooded hills rising abruptly from the water's edge. These hills are rarely, if ever, more than six or seven hundred feet high, and upon the summits of them the forest gives way to open meadow land or tree-studded bush; but as one nears the mouth of the Kasai, the hills upon the left bank of the Congo gradually decrease in height until just before arriving at Kwamouth, the post at the confluence of the Kasai and the Congo, the river is running through grassy plains dotted here and there with stunted trees. With the exception of a fair number of white-headed eagles, we did not see much of bird life in this part of the river, the absence of sandbanks and islands accounting for the absence of the great masses of wild-fowl which we were to see later in the Kasai. The captain of our ship upon his last voyage had seen some elephants upon the shores of the channel, and one evening when we were moored against the French shore, a native from the coast who was in charge of the fuel supply there told us tales of a wonderful lake

some distance to the northward where elephants are still to be seen in countless herds. We also met a Frenchman who had gone to the expense of purchasing a rifle especially for elephant shooting, so we took it that these animals must be fairly common within easy reach of the right bank of the channel.

Along the left bank of the Congo runs the telegraph line, and it spans the mouth of the Kasai raised upon two iron structures, one on each side of the Kasai, somewhat suggestive of the Eiffel Tower, about ninety feet in height. At the post of Kwamouth there are now two white officials connected with the telegraph line, and it is to Kwamouth that one must send if one wishes to despatch a cable to Europe when travelling in the district of the Kasai. Formerly there was a Roman Catholic mission at Kwamouth, but this has been abandoned owing to the ravages of the sleeping sickness.

Though the channel had been in its way beautiful, especially when the various greens of the forest gave place to the purple hues of evening, the journey up the lower Kasai was, to my mind, far more enjoyable. As I have said, the Congo up to Kwamouth had but little to show in the way of animal life, but the Kasai, a little above its mouth, is simply teeming with hippopotami, crocodiles, and innumerable varieties of aquatic and other birds. At the confluence with the Congo the Kasai is only some 500 yards in width, but as one ascends it the river becomes broader, and numerous islands, some covered with forest, others merely clothed in coarse dry grass or reeds, begin to appear. There are some rocks in the bed of the lower Kasai, which

cause the captains some little uneasiness in the dry season when the waters are low ; in fact our vessel touched lightly upon some of them, when our captain took us hastily to the shore to avoid a tornado. These storms come up very quickly in the rainy season. One sees dark masses of cloud overhanging the river valley in the distance, and one hears a far-off rumble of thunder ; in an incredibly short space of time the storm draws near, and one sees a grey mist sweeping down the river towards one, the thunder increasing momentarily in violence until its peals are so frequent as to be almost indistinguishable one from another and to produce one long-drawn roar. Just before the mist reaches one a violent gust of wind strikes the vessel, often sufficient to capsize her should she not have been made fast to the bank, and then the rain, which has appeared like mist in the distance, comes down with a violence seldom, if ever, seen outside the tropics. Fortunately, these storms are usually of brief duration, and pass away as quickly as they come ; accidents, however, are sometimes caused by them to the steamers, and our captain had knowingly put his vessel over the rocks, preferring the possibility of sinking close to the shore to the probability of being capsized in mid-stream when the wind struck the vessel.

On the Congo we had seen but few natives ; in the Kasai their canoes were far more frequently visible rowing fishermen to and from the sandbanks, where they set their nets and fish-traps. Often they would approach us holding up fish for sale, and occasionally we stopped to purchase it. The purchase of fish by our native crew caused us no little amusement. Money has not yet found its way to the natives

of the Kasai, so that everything had to be purchased by exchange. The hard bargaining which an ancient piece of dried fish can produce must be seen to be believed. Cloth, salt, mitakos (*i.e.* brass rods), torn shirts, hats, empty bottles, &c., were all exchanged for the fish, and on one occasion a member of the crew took off the trousers he was wearing and handed them over in exchange for a particularly choice morsel!

In the evenings we would make fast to a grassy island or a sandbank, and all of the crew would go ashore to spend the night. As the vessel slowly approaches to within a yard or two of the shore a man springs overboard from the bows, carrying a light anchor if there are no trees at hand, or a wire rope if there is anything on the shore to attach it to, and in a very short time the vessel is securely moored to the bank; the crew then hasten ashore, carrying with them their bedding, and firebrands from the furnaces (for wood fuel only is used) with which to cook their evening meal. As darkness falls, the scene on shore is very picturesque. In the background the tall rank grass stands motionless in the still air of the African night, while the flickering light of the numerous fires plays upon the small cotton shelters of all colours of the rainbow erected by the crew as a protection against mosquitoes. Meantime pots are on the fire, and the men grouped round them are talking in subdued voices, while a gurgling sound is to be heard as many tobacco pipes, in which the smoke is drawn through water in a calabash under the bow, are passed from man to man, and in the distance one hears the weird grunt of the hippopotamus, mildly indignant at the invasion of his feeding-ground by

man. But if the evenings are delightful on a river steamer, the days are no less so, particularly when passing through such stretches of river as that known as Wissman Pool just below the spot where the Kasai receives on its left bank the waters of the Kwango. In Wissman Pool the naturalist, sportsman, or photographer can scarcely allow himself time for meals, so much life is there to be seen, so many chances of a shot, and always the possibility of a sufficiently near approach to a hippo to admit of a snapshot being taken. To any one like myself, whose previous wanderings have mainly been in desert lands, the journey through Wissman Pool must be particularly delightful. The pool is wide, that is to say the course of the river is broken up into innumerable channels between sandbanks and islands, the latter covered with bushes, rank grass, or reeds. The land on either side of the river is flat. On all sides numerous herds of hippopotami were in sight, varying in numbers from three or four to about fifteen. Early in the morning and again in the evening they were to be seen upon the islands, and sometimes even at midday they would be moving about amid the grass or on the sandbanks, while many times we passed close by them as they lay in the water, their ears, eyes, and nostrils only exposed, scarcely heeding the approach of the steamer. Wissman remarks upon the enormous quantity of these great animals in this part of the river, and it is difficult to believe that they can have decreased materially in numbers since his day. Sometimes as the vessel drew near, one of the monsters would slowly rise to his feet in the shallow water in which he had been basking, showing for a moment all his great body as he



WISSMANN POOL.





quietly moved off into deeper water, in which he would disappear, to rise again in a few seconds and gaze at the receding form of the steamer with an air of mild surprise. Crocodiles, too, were very numerous, and whenever we were within reach of the shore I was always momentarily expecting to get a shot at one as he lay asleep with his mouth open beside the water. Torday, too, was at these times ever ready with his shot-gun to bring down a duck or a spur-winged goose for the table, or to shoot a specimen for skinning of one of the many kind of birds with which the islands swarm. Hardy, who does not shoot, found plenty of exercise for his pencil in making hasty sketches, to be worked up later, of the inhabitants, human and otherwise, of the Pool. During our ascent of the Kasai towards Dima we saw no elephants, but these animals are numerous in that country, and upon our return journey in 1909 we got a magnificent view of a herd of six as they slowly retreated from the water's edge into the long grass at the approach of the steamer.

The country continues to consist of open grass land studded with trees until the mouth of the Kwango is left behind, when the banks become thickly wooded. The Kwango flows into the Kasai between swamps covered with papyrus and reeds, a favourite wallowing-place for buffalo during the fierce heat of the midday sun. Dima lies but eight or nine miles above the confluence, upon the left bank of the Kasai. As the headquarters of the Kasai Company it contains the residence of the director and the general stores, to which all trade goods are brought upon their arrival from Europe, and where they are sorted before

being distributed among the factories, each factory receiving such goods as are most saleable in its locality. Here, too, are the workshops wherein the steamers of the company are repaired. There is, therefore, always a fair number of European residents in Dima. The director has a couple of secretaries, the accountant's office occupies several clerks, the transport of the trade goods requires the services of two or three white men, while the workshops are looked after by quite a staff of European engineers. In addition to this, there are nearly always several people staying temporarily in Dima, for every new agent of the company goes to headquarters on his arrival in Africa to be appointed to a factory, and every agent calls at Dima on his way home. The situation of Dima does not at first sight strike one as being particularly desirable, for the post is built in a clearing of the dense forest, and the banks of the river are by no means high; but it would be difficult to find an equally convenient spot for the transport of trade goods and the reception of the rubber and ivory collected in the district. A great deal of produce comes from the basin of the Kwilu River, a tributary of the Kwango, of which I shall have more to say later on, so that it would take a considerable time to get this produce far up the Kasai, where the current is very strong and the speed of the steamer low, should the headquarters of the company be moved higher up the river to a more healthy locality, such, for instance, as Pangu, near the mouth of the Lubue River, where the Kasai Company has recently founded a hospital. Dima itself, as we saw it in 1909, was a far more agreeable post than when we stayed there in November 1907. Upon our arrival only

the houses of the director and the chief engineer, the two mess-rooms, the accountant's office, and the stores were of brick, but upon our return we found that all the old plaster houses, with their thatched roofs, had given way to neat structures, roofed with tiles, and built of locally made bricks. The clearing, too, in which the post is situated had been considerably extended, and this has had the effect of rendering the place far more airy, and lessening the oppressive heat; and better drainage of the swampy ground in the neighbouring forest has led to a great reduction in the numbers of the mosquitoes, which were quite as numerous as we cared about when we arrived in Dima. The varied kinds of work, from the mending of machinery to the wheeling of small barrow-loads of bricks, naturally necessitates the employment of natives of many grades of civilisation. All the native clerks and most of the mechanics and carpenters come from the coast, the majority of them from Sierra Leone, Lagos, or Accra. These gentlemen are very far up in the social scale, and their costumes on Sunday are, as a rule, neat and in good taste. Next in magnificence to them come the civilised Congo natives, not infrequently retired soldiers who have attained the rank of sergeant or corporal; the costumes of these, though very spotless on the Sabbath, will sometimes be marred by the presence of some incongruous article, such, for example, as a long drooping feather in the side of a straw hat. These people are usually employed as headmen in charge of a certain number of labourers. Then come the "boys," or white men's personal servants, and the "civilised" workmen who have received some teaching

at a mission. The appearance of such people when attired in their best is strongly suggestive of a rainbow, and the various garments which compose their costumes are just those which would *not* be worn at the same time by any but an African negro whose "civilisation" has just brought him to the wearing of trousers and whose wage will allow him to indulge the savage's craving for brilliant colours. The fourth class of native employee at Dima is composed of the man who has recently joined the company's services and adheres to the loin-cloth, and the little boy who, by no means overdressed, is commencing his career by wheeling small barrow-loads of earth to the brick-makers. Nearly, if not quite all of the inhabitants of the workmen's village in Dima profess some form of Christianity. The majority of the Kasai district natives working there come from the Sankuru or upper Kasai, originating from the country around the Lusambo and Luebo. When an agent from up the river is told to enlist a certain number of men for service at Dima, he naturally does not suggest to his best and most willing workmen that they should go; he tries to get rid of the worst men he has got, therefore one finds at Dima representatives of many different tribes, often men who have made their villages too hot to hold them, and have thus been obliged to earn a livelihood as workmen in one of the company's factories, from which they have been drafted as undesirable. Thus the vices of many tribes are to be found among the native inhabitants of Dima and the virtues of but few. This it appears is specially the case among the "boys" who offer themselves for service to the new-comer from Europe. Some of these have very likely been dis-

missed for theft, idleness, or general incompetence, and are working at Dima until they can get another job; others, good enough boys in the bush, have been left at Dima when their masters have gone home, and have preferred to stay there in the hope of finding another employer to returning to their native villages, for which they have often conceived a feeling of contempt. These latter have usually suffered by contact with the low-class workman referred to above, and it is a very risky thing to engage one of them as a servant for the journey up country. We took no servants from Dima, though many such offered themselves, but were content with two boys who had come with us until we could get some absolutely uncivilised and unspoilt youths whom we could train ourselves. At the time of our arrival in Dima the workmen from the coast received their pay in Congolese coin, but the natives were paid in trade goods, money being as yet without value in the district. An attempt to introduce coin is being made now in two or three of the larger centres of the Kasai district, such as Lusambo and, I believe, Luebo, and the Kasai Company now pays all its people in Dima in money; the company's stores being open daily to supply the workmen with such articles for exchange with the local natives as they may wish to buy. The large number of people permanently resident in Dima necessitates the importation of a considerable quantity of food-stuffs from a distance, the local Baboma not producing sufficient to supply the post; every ten days, therefore, a steamer ascends the Kwilu as far as the post of Kikwit with trade goods for the factories on that river, and returns laden with manioc flour, maize, plantains, live chickens, and

goats from that land of plenty, the country near Luano. There is a farm a mile or two east of Dima which produces some vegetables, and where a few cows and a small flock of sheep are kept under the superintendence of a European farmer; as yet, however, it is rather an experiment to ascertain what can be grown and reared in the neighbourhood than an attempt to supply Dima with the necessaries of life. Should it ever be able to provide all that Dima wants, the agricultural people of the Kwilu will lose a very considerable trade.

A certain amount of sport is to be obtained near Dima; in 1907 I shot a harnessed bush-buck in a small clearing in the forest less than half-an-hour's walk from the post, while in January 1909 I saw an elephant's spoor very little further away, and spent a day hunting buffalo without success in the papyrus swamps towards the mouth of the Kwango. The animals were in the swamps right enough, but I made too much noise wading and slipping about upon the papyrus trampled down by the buffalo to get a shot. These swamps were alive with mosquitoes, and altogether were by no means an ideal hunting-ground. At one time a native hunter was employed to shoot buffalo for the white men's mess, but this seems to have caused very little reduction in their numbers.

Of our doings at Dima there is little to tell; we were anxious to get to work on the Sankuru River, but were compelled to await the arrival of our provisions from the coast. In the meantime Torday put in a little ethnographical work among the Baboma, purchased a number of articles of their manufacture, and, making as many inquiries

as possible among the white men as to the conditions prevailing in the country we proposed to visit, he formed his plans definitely for the first six months or so of our journey. We were to proceed up the Kasai and Sankuru rivers as far as Batempa, a little above Lusambo, whence we were to go further inland to the Lubefu River, there to study a portion of the Batetela tribe. After this we were to descend the Sankuru and visit the Bushongo people, commonly but erroneously termed the Bakuba, who bade fair to prove of exceptional interest, to judge by several magnificent pieces of their wood-carving which we saw in Dima.

This work, we anticipated, would occupy us about six months, at the end of which time Hardy was to leave us for England. As a matter of fact, the study of the Batetela on the Lubefu led us to continue our work among the sub-tribes of that people in the equatorial forest after Hardy had departed, and the success which attended Torday's work among the eastern Bushongo induced him to visit the capital of their king, so that our stay in the region of the Sankuru was extended to fourteen months instead of the six in which we had expected to complete our work.

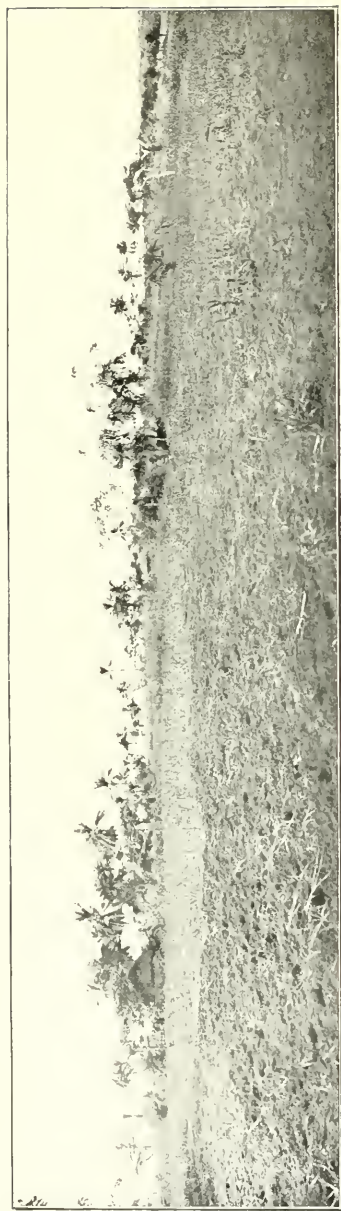
We heard in Dima that there lived near the Kasai Company's factory of Mokunji, close to the Lubefu River, a deposed Batetela chief, who was a remarkably intelligent native and very well disposed towards the European. In the hope of obtaining some valuable information from this man, Torday decided to proceed to Mokunji as directly as possible.

We left Dima early in the morning of December 2, 1907, on board the Kasai Company's steamer *Velde*. This little vessel contained accommodation for no one excepting

her captain and European engineer, so that we were obliged to pitch our tents every evening upon the river bank or upon an island. This necessitated the captain terminating his day's run sufficiently early to enable us to encamp by daylight, and also considerably delayed the steamer's start in the mornings. The voyage, therefore, occupied more time than is usually taken over the journey to Batempa, and it was only upon the twenty-third day after our start from Dima that we reached the end of our voyage. The upper deck of the *Velde* was very small, there being only just sufficient room for the five of us to sit around a table for meals, so that our journey cannot be said to have been a very luxurious one, but the glorious river scenery and the numberless interesting sights which nature had to offer in the way of birds and beasts combined to make the voyage pleasant. Just above Dima the Kasai is only about half a mile in width and very deep, with a strong current. Further on, however, between the factory of Eolo and the Government post of Basongo, near the confluence of the Kasai and the Sankuru, the river often attains a width of fully three miles, and its course is much broken by sandbanks and islands, its depth being reduced in proportion to the greater width of its bed. Although the shores of the river are usually clothed in forest, undulating grassy downs are to be seen behind the belt of woodland that borders the stream, and only after entering the Sankuru does one reach a real forest country. Upon its right bank the Kasai receives no tributaries of any importance, for the Lukenye River flows parallel to it into Lac Leopold II., about fifty miles to the north; but upon its left or southern bank it receives the waters







OPEN COUNTRY BESIDE THE KASAL



MANGAY.

of the Kancha, Lubue, and Loange rivers, rising in the uplands of the Congo-Angola frontier, as well as numerous small streams. There is a Kasai Company's factory at Eolo, and some plantations of rubber belonging to the Société Anonyme Belge at a spot called Mangay, about fifty miles farther up the river, also on its left bank. At the mouth of the Lubue there is a factory of the Kasai Company, whence communication is kept open by means of a whale-boat with the company's post of Dumba on the Lubue, which we visited during the last part of our journey. The company has recently founded a hospital for its white and native employees on the high bank of the Kasai near the mouth of the Lubue, but the building of this post had not been commenced at the end of 1907. The only Government station on the Kasai is the post of Basongo. We spent one night here, and were told by Lieutenant Le Grand that the Bashilele people who inhabited the country to the south of his post were a most warlike and hostile people; indeed he gave us a number of arrows which had been shot at him and his soldiers during a few days' journey he had just undertaken in the interior. We were to make acquaintance ourselves later on with the Bashilele, as my narrative will show.

During our journey up the Kasai the captain of the *Velde* told us that about the year 1904 or 1905 a very deadly epidemic had broken out among the hippopotami of that river and the Sankuru. So great had been the mortality among the animals (which even now exist in the middle Kasai in almost as great numbers as in Wissman Pool) that the factories on the bank had been obliged to employ men with canoes to push out into the current the carcasses which

had lodged on the shore close at hand, the stench from which, as they began to decay, had been appalling. I could gather no information as to the nature of this disease.

When we entered the Sankuru the river banks became more densely wooded, and the patches of open grass land visible in the background rarer and more rare. The river is narrower than the Kasai, seldom exceeding about a mile in width, and the foliage on the banks rises abruptly from the water's edge, forming solid walls of luxuriant vegetation. This kind of scenery, although undoubtedly beautiful, is very apt to become monotonous, so that we were always glad when a call at one of the factories, of which there are about eight below Lusambo, broke the dulness of a voyage through the forest. Of course there was always plenty to look at; for, in addition to animal life, canoes of native fishermen were ever to be seen darting in and out of the almost invisible openings in the vegetation, making the entrance to the little harbours where are kept the canoes of the villages, which as a rule are situated some little way inland. But we were eager to begin our work in earnest, and naturally chafed at our enforced inactivity upon the steamer. In addition to the delay of which the pitching and striking of our camp was the cause, our progress was retarded by the lack of prepared fuel on the banks. Wood only is burned on the steamers, and the Kasai Company has established posts all along the river, at each of which about half-a-dozen natives are employed in felling trees and cutting the wood into suitable lengths for the furnaces of the vessels. As these men are under no supervision they by no means overwork themselves, with the result that one often finds

very little wood ready when the steamer calls ; consequently the voyage has frequently to be interrupted while the crew cut wood in the forest or on the shore. We were, I believe, exceptionally unlucky in finding so little wood prepared, and our stoppages were therefore more frequent than is usual. We paid a brief visit to the English mission at Inkongu, a few miles below Lusambo, where Mr. Westcott is doing a very good work, strictly undenominational, among the natives, and at Lusambo itself, the centre of government of the district of Lualaba-Kasai. We found that Commandant Gustin, the commissioner, was absent upon a tour of inspection, but we were received by the deputy-commissioner, Commandant Saut. On hearing that our destination was the Lubefu River, this gentleman informed us that he was expecting a caravan to arrive with rubber from that river, and that he had no doubt the men would be glad to earn an additional wage instead of returning without loads to their homes. He therefore promised to send them on to us at Batempa, where we agreed to await their arrival.

Just as our steamer was leaving we received a message from the magistrate who resides at Lusambo, strongly advising us to abandon our journey to Mokunji, for he had heard that there was considerable unrest and anti-European feeling among the Batetela villages that lay upon the road, and he was of the opinion that we should not reach the Lubefu without being attacked. We thanked the magistrate for his friendly warning, but we had come too far to abandon our journey at the first rumour of trouble, and we continued our voyage to Ikoka, a factory between Lusambo and Batempa, fully determined to try our best to reach our destination, Mokunji.

## CHAPTER II

### IN THE BATETELA COUNTRY

OUR ill-fortune in the matter of fuel followed us to the end of the voyage, for we were compelled to stop and cut wood in the forest during the run from Ikoka to Batempa, which under ordinary circumstances should occupy about four hours. The scenery between Ikoka and Batempa is exceptionally fine. The left bank of the Sankuru is flat and swampy, clothed with the impenetrable forest which is so prominent a feature in African river scenery, whose tangled masses of luxuriant vegetation overhang the swiftly rushing stream; but on the right bank red rocky cliffs rise sheer from the water's edge to a height of some 300 feet, the nesting-place of innumerable grey parrots, the ruddy colouring of the rocks providing a striking contrast to the varied greens of the forest which clothe their summits. The Kasai Company's factory at Batempa is situated on the right bank a few hundred yards up-stream from the commencement of these cliffs, and the view down-river from the post is one of the finest on the Sankuru. We arrived at Batempa on the morning of December 24th. We had just got our baggage conveyed from the *Velde* to the shore, and the company's agent was showing us a suitable position for our camp, when a tornado, which had been threatening all the morning, suddenly broke with characteristic violence and soaked our

various loads long before there was time to remove them to the shelter of a rubber drying-house, the water rushing down from the rising ground to the west of the factory in streams several inches deep, completely inundating the ground whereon our baggage had been deposited. Like most of these tropical storms, however, the tornado was of brief duration, and excepting that we had to sleep that night in wet tents pitched in a puddle little harm was done. Since our visit to Batempa the factory has been removed to higher ground, where the rains can work less havoc, and whence an even finer view of the river is obtainable. The day following our arrival was Christmas Day, which we celebrated as well as circumstances would permit with the company's agent. A sheep, purchased at Ikoka (which, by the way, is considered a rare luxury in most parts of the Kasai), some chickens, a plum-pudding from the Army and Navy Stores, and a chocolate cake, in the art of making which Torday is a past master, accompanied by a bottle of champagne from our limited supply of medical comforts, constituted the feast to which our appetites, as yet unimpaired by contact with the Congo climate, did ample justice; and in place of the old-time ghost stories in the evening we first heard of the existence of what promised to be a truly remarkable animal. As we sat smoking after dinner on the verandah of the agent's bungalow, admiring the wonderful effects of the moonlight over the Sankuru and listening to the music of Torday's phonograph, a weird cry echoed through the forest close behind the factory. We were all attention in a moment; neither of us had heard the like before.

The noise was quite distinctive, "Ow-wa," repeated three or four times, and then silence. We questioned the agent, and he informed us that the cry proceeded from a small animal which was fairly common in the neighbourhood, but which he himself had never seen. He told us that it was held in considerable awe by the natives, and that a former director of the Kasai Company had offered a very large price for a living specimen without being able to induce the people to attempt its capture.

We at once summoned a member of the local Basonge tribe who was employed in the factory, and from him we elicited the following astounding information. The animal is known to the Basonge as the bembe, and to the Batetela as the yuka; it is grey in colour, and is about the size of a fox-terrier dog; it lives in holes in the trees, and although its movements on the ground are slow, it moves in the tree-tops with great agility, always climbing *with its back to the branch!* Its hindquarters are hairless, its legs long, and it walks upon its wrists! It is a dangerous beast to interfere with, although our informant could not tell us exactly what it would do to any one who was rash enough to interfere with it. Obviously we had come across a truly remarkable creature! Needless to say, we were most anxious to secure a specimen, living or dead, of this wonderful animal, so Torday promised a large reward of trade goods to any one who would capture one, and I took many a ramble with my gun in the forest by night in the hope that I might see the form of the "yuka" silhouetted against the sky as he emerged from his resting-place to feed. The creature, it is said, always emits its strange cry



when starting out in search of food, and again when returning after its meal, but if disturbed it at once becomes silent, and resting absolutely motionless among the branches (after the manner of monkeys when hunted), it is almost indistinguishable even by daylight. Needless to say, my nightly peregrinations in search of the animal resulted in nothing but scratches and discomfort to myself, and when we left Batempa the yuka remained as much a mystery as the night when we first heard its voice. We were, however, so thoroughly interested in it that we were determined to leave no stone unturned during our stay in the district to obtain a specimen for the Zoo or for the Museum.

Before our porters arrived, and thus enabled us to start for the Lubefu River, we witnessed a very picturesque dance in the factory of Batempa. The local Basonge chief, having heard of our presence and of our desire to purchase articles of native manufacture, came in one morning bringing a large number of interesting objects for sale, and accompanied by his professional dancers and orchestra. During our wanderings in the Kasai we never heard better native music than that produced by this Basonge band. The Bambala of the Kwilu River and the Babunda of the Kancha (peoples of whom I shall have something to say later on) are undoubtedly superior as singers to the Basonge, but as instrumental musicians the latter are unrivalled in the districts we visited. The orchestra was composed of a number of drums, wooden gongs, flutes, and a xylophone. The first two of these might well have been left out, but they are so common in Africa that one's ears become quite hardened to their deafening and monotonous din. The

remarkable point about the orchestra was the flute-playing. Each instrument is capable of producing one note only, but a large number of performers played upon them, and so exactly did they keep time and come in at the right moment that the melody produced was extremely pleasing to the European ear, and quite different to the hubbub with which African dances are usually accompanied. The leader of the orchestra, no small personage in the village, played a large xylophone in which wooden keys of different thicknesses placed above calabashes, varying in size to produce the different notes, were struck with wooden hammers. The dancers performed to the strains of the band. A peculiarity of the Basonge people is the existence of a regularly trained and *paid* corps of dancers. These consist for the most part of small girls, aged from about eight to ten years, attired in spotless loin-cloths of European cotton-stuff, and covered with many strings of coloured beads. These little ladies move slowly in Indian file, making S-like curves in their course around the band in the mazes of a dance which, if not graceful in itself, presents a very picturesque spectacle as performed by the children. A large number of the men who accompanied the chief also took part in the dance, but the performance of the little girls was undoubtedly the principal feature. Music and dancing are the arts in which the Basonge chiefly excel, and we were unable to find any traces of the carver's art to compare with the specimens we were later to secure among the Bushongo. The Basonge, however, manufacture some very neat and ornamental basket-work.

It may seem rather extraordinary that a tribe which is



THE LEADER OF THE BASONGE ORCHESTRA.



THE SANKURU NEAR BATEMPA.



so far ahead of its neighbours in the gentle arts referred to above should be strongly addicted to cannibalism; yet such is the case. At the present day, when the European is firmly established in their country and the centre of government of the district lies on their frontier, the practice of eating human flesh has practically died out, but a few years ago it was very prevalent, and doubtless many instances of it occur to-day unbeknown to any one save the inhabitants of the villages in which they take place.

The Basonge exhibit many other signs of their contact with the white man besides the decline of their cannibalistic habits. Native-made cloth is no longer worn among them, its place having been entirely taken by the cheap cotton goods from Europe which form the present currency in the country, and which have quite superseded the former commodities used in exchange by the natives. In years gone by hoe-blades were largely used for bartering purposes, and even now hoe-blades imported from Europe are readily accepted in exchange for food-stuffs and other local produce, although their value has fallen considerably since the time when a man used to pay from ten to thirty blades for a wife, when four of these useful articles would buy a goat, and when the price of a male slave would not usually exceed twenty. The old-time hard wooden spears and bows and arrows have largely given place to cheap trade guns, and in many other ways the Basonge are exhibiting signs of that change which must assuredly come over native life when once the European has firmly set foot in the country.

At Batempa we engaged a cook and three "boys." My henchman, engaged on Stanley Pool, had returned down

the river in the *Velde* on his way back to Leopoldville, where he could indulge his propensities for idling to the fullest extent, so we were left with Jones as the sole native member of our party. We decided to employ as personal servants quite young boys who had never previously been in the service of a European, and allow Jones to teach them their duties. I think it is far more satisfactory as a rule, when a long stay is to be made in Africa, for the European to engage as his "boy" a young, intelligent savage, and "break him in" himself than to take over some one else's servant. The negro when a child is extremely quick at learning anything which interests him, and the newly acquired dignity of becoming a white man's "boy" is quite sufficient to give the lad an interest in his work. If one has another European's cast-off "boy" one finds that he has usually learned bad habits from long intercourse with the semi-civilised natives of the factory or Government post, and also it will take him a long time to unlearn the ways to which his late master has accustomed him and become used to those of his new employer. On the whole, therefore, I think it is best for the white man, whenever possible, to train his own boy, and the result will almost surely be that he will get exactly the servant that he deserves. Treat your boy well and he will repay you with faithful service; keep him in his place or he will presume upon your good nature and become careless and idle; be absolutely just in all your dealings with him, as you would be with the porters who carry your loads from one place to another, and never allow him to imagine that the fact that he is your confidential servant will save

him from punishment should he provoke disputes by his arrogance in the villages at which you stay. My "boy," Sam, whom we engaged at Batempa, was in my employ for close upon two years, during the whole of which time he carried the keys of my boxes and was responsible for their contents; I never had a single article stolen from them. This should prove that the much-abused African servant can, at any rate, be honest. While on the subject of "boys" let me say a word as to their payment. In the Congo one is obliged when in a Government post to make a written contract with one's "boy," duly signed by a magistrate, but in the bush one cannot, of course, observe this regulation, and one accordingly writes out a contract oneself and explains to the "boy" what it contains. The wages paid to uncivilised natives engaged up-country are very low, and I think it is as well to arrange as low a rate of pay as possible with one's "boy," afterwards delighting him with occasional presents. "Boys" are usually hired by the month, but I consider it a great mistake to actually pay the boy monthly, especially when travelling about. Let him know, of course, exactly how much he is entitled to, and explain to him that he can draw his pay as it becomes due, but offer to keep it for him and let him draw from you goods as he actually requires them. It is no trouble to write down the amounts he draws on the back of his contract, and you will do the "boy" a kindness by restricting his natural inclination to squander his earnings; in addition to this you will have to carry about with you rather less trade goods than if you always had to pay your servants at

the end of each month. "Boys" waste their pay in most ridiculous ways. It is very common indeed for a lad fresh from the "bush" to be kindly received by older servants in some Government post which you happen to visit. These "sharks" suggest that on his departure he should seal a friendship with them by an interchange of gifts, by which means they extract a good sum in trade goods from the boy, giving him some useless article in return. It is astonishing how prevalent this custom is, and it is incredible how often the same boy can be caught by the trick. If he has to come to you to draw the goods he will think twice about spending them, or very likely tell you why he wants them, in which case you can show him that he is being made a fool of. I am sure that the very little trouble caused by this method of banking for your boy is more than repaid by the greater honesty with which he will serve you. Once let him have the entire management of his earnings and he will squander them in a very short time, after which, being penniless, he will very likely steal. If he has to come to you when he wants his goods he will also be less likely to gamble, and gambling among the servants must be put down with a firm hand or wholesale robbery will result. It is illegal to hit one's boy, but gambling, hemp-smoking, and drunkenness can only be met by immediate chastisement, which, however, need not be resorted to for anything else; for theft, of course, must result in dismissal. These remarks only apply to "boys" engaged for expeditions such as ours or for service in remote up-country stations. On the coast, where money is the currency and the innumerable temptations to spend



it inseparable from big settlements are everywhere to be found, it is hopeless to try and look after one's "boy's" financial affairs; but in civilised places older and more experienced servants are employed, and these are, or should be, able to take care of themselves. During our journey we always employed the system of banking described above and never once regretted it. When we paid off "Sam" just before our return to Europe he was a rich man; had he been paid monthly he would not have had a penny to his name. In his case we paid over his earnings to a missionary near his home to obviate the risk of his being robbed of them on his way back from the coast. Sam, who was only about twelve years of age, commenced his service for a fixed wage of eight yards of cotton material per month! Our cook, Luchima, a member of the Bate-tela tribe, received double this amount. He turned out to be a fair cook, as cooks go in Central Africa, and a faithful servant, whom only ill-health prevented from accompanying us to the end of our journey. The other servants engaged consisted of a "boy" for Hardy, also very young, and another lad whose name, being interpreted, signified "Onions," and who was to do odd jobs about the camp, help the other boys, and carry a few of the small objects, such as camera, water-bottle, &c., which we should need upon the march.

After a few days spent at Batempa the porters who were on their way home to the Lubefu arrived, and we could start upon our journey. Sixty-five men under two "capitas" or headmen appeared, so we were able to take most of our impedimenta with us, leaving a few "chop-

boxes," or cases of provisions, at Batempa, to be sent for as required. The porters on the whole were a fine sturdy lot of men, for the Batetela as a rule are powerful people; all were attired in loin-cloths of imported cotton, and many wore suspended from their belts the skins of small wild-cats which are so commonly worn in this district as to form part of the national dress of the Batetela. The distribution of loads to a new lot of porters is very often a very troublesome business. One naturally tries to give the heaviest objects to the bigger men, but unless one keeps a sharp look-out the strong ones will frequently pass on their burdens to others, physically less fit, who are unable to resent this treatment. Porters will usually try to secure the smallest loads, quite regardless of the weight, preferring a very heavy but compact box of cartridges to an almost empty wooden crate. This is not so ridiculous as it may at first sight appear, for all over the Kasai district double loads are carried attached to a pole borne upon the shoulders of the porters, so that a small and heavy package is less fatiguing to carry along the narrow, tortuous forest paths than a large but lighter one, which would need careful steering to prevent it continually catching in the branches which overhang the road. When once a load has been handed over to its porters they are responsible for it until they reach their destination. The usual rule is to pay the carriers their wages at the end of the journey, and to serve out to every man each day a quantity of the rough salt which takes the place of small change in most parts of the Kasai, and with which the porters can buy food in the villages where the caravan

halts for the night. Upon leaving the shores of the Sankuru our way lay for a few miles through the dense belt of forest which borders the river, in the course of which we had to scale some steep ascents that caused our porters some trouble in carrying their loads, for the track near the factory was none of the best and much overhung by trees and bushes; but once we had left the river forest behind us our path lay in great undulating grassy plains in which very few trees were visible, except in the valleys where little streams meandered through strips of woodland. The weather was intensely hot, and our twenty-three days of inactivity on board the *Velde* had by no means fitted us for much exertion, so we felt the effects of our first day's march rather severely. Torday experienced one of his rare attacks of fever about an hour before reaching the village at which we were to spend the night, and collapsed upon the road, but we sent back the portable hammock in which Hardy was travelling to bring him in, and a little treatment and some sleep brought his temperature down, so that he was able to march next day. We camped at the little village of Okitulonga, the first of the Batetela settlements that we entered. There was very little of interest in the place save that here we first saw the Batetela hut, which is nowadays being gradually superseded in many villages by rectangular dwellings built of plaster, modelled upon the plan of the European's bungalow. The native Batetela hut is circular, with very low walls—only some two feet high—covered with a high conical roof of thatched grass. The interiors of these huts are dark and stuffy in the extreme. The men in the village, like our porters, were

all dressed in material imported from Europe, but the women's costume was remarkable, if scanty. It consisted solely of a girdle, from the front of which was suspended a minute piece of cloth, the lower end of which was held in between the legs; at the back a few strings of beads, about eighteen inches in length, hung like a tail from the belt. This completed the dress. The primitive Batetela ladies are nowhere extravagant in the matter of costumes, as I shall show when I describe our visit to those portions of the tribe which inhabit the equatorial forest, but it struck me as rather remarkable that so near the Sankuru, where the men have discarded their native-made loin-cloths in favour of European cotton-stuffs, and where any man will wear any European garment that he can lay hands on, that the women should be so conservative in their loyalty to their scanty national dress. There is plenty of European material to be earned in the district, so one can only imagine that the natives prefer their women to dress in the fashions of their grandmothers. A few of the more important Batetela, particularly those who have served under the white man, will dress their wives in cotton cloth, but this has not yet become the custom with the ordinary inhabitants of the villages.

Our second stage brought us to Kasongo-Batetela, the village of one of the two most important chiefs of this part of the Batetela country; the second one being the chief of Mokunji, whom we were on our way to visit. These men are the overlords of many villages, each of which has its own petty chief. The country at this point is hilly, consisting of about equal portions of forest

and tree-studded grass land. Upon our arrival at Kasongo's village we encamped at the rest-house belonging to the Kasai Company, where the agent from Batempa stays when he visits the place to purchase rubber. We were received by a Sierra Leone clerk in the employ of the Kasai Company, who informed us that Kasongo, whose residence was situated on a hill about a mile from the rest-house, would visit us with his band in the evening. We here broke through our rule of always, where possible, pitching our tents actually in the native village, for we were on our way to study the Batetela nearer the Lubefu, and we knew that we should find ample opportunities later on of observing the daily life of the people, while little could be expected to result from merely sleeping a night in Kasongo's village; therefore we encamped at the rest-house. Just before sundown the chief came to visit us in state. Attired in a white slouch hat, a white jacket, knickerbockers and stockings, he did not present a very dignified appearance, but if one may estimate his importance by the amount of noise produced by his orchestra he must have been a very great personage indeed. Doubtless he had heard that the Basonge chief at Batempa had impressed us by the quality of his music, and he was not to be outdone by his neighbour. His drummers beat their drums and gongs and yelled themselves hoarse, while others added to the din by means of iron bells, and little girls manipulated curiously shaped rattles of basket-work. Except that many of the men wore large tufts of chicken or plantain-eater feathers on their heads, there was nothing striking

about the appearance of Kasongo's followers, and altogether we were not sorry when his visit was at an end. We made a few phonographic records of his music before his departure, and created a great deal of surprise by playing them over to him, together with some records of the Basonge orchestra taken at Batempa. Kasongo was accompanied by his wives, the chief of whom was attired in a great deal of white and blue cloth and carried a bead-covered wand. This lady began to make obvious advances to Hardy; she insisted in sitting as near to him as she could get, and favouring him with glances of the tenderest description. Poor Hardy's discomfiture was great, for he could not speak a word of the woman's language, and was at loss to know how to snub her effectually without giving offence; her lord and master, however, did not honour us with his company very long, but soon left us to our dinner, taking his noisy musicians and forward spouse with him. After leaving Kasongo-Batetela we began to approach the villages in which we had been told by the magistrate at Lusambo we should in all probability be attacked. We had determined to proceed from the Sankuru to the Lubefu unattended by an armed escort despite this friendly warning, for we were convinced that the presence of armed men in our caravan could not fail to arouse the suspicion of the natives and ruin our chances of gaining their confidence, without which we might just as well have stayed at home for all the amount of information as to their habits and customs which we should be able to extract from them. When once a native whom you are questioning becomes

suspicious of your motives he can be as obstinate as a mule, and not one atom of information will you get out of him even if you are possessed of the patience of Job. I have often seen a half-suspicious, half-idiotic expression come over a native's face when we have been discussing with him a point relating to his beliefs, or some other delicate subject, and I learned to know that further interrogation of that particular individual would be merely a waste of time; he does not quite know why you are asking questions, and nothing will induce him to answer them. This obstinacy can be exceedingly annoying. I have heard Torday talking by the hour to an intelligent native, from whom he has got quite a fund of information, trying gradually to work up to some important question regarding religion, but as soon as this question has been mooted the man has closed up his brain like a book and become as stupid as he was intelligent before he realised what turn the conversation was taking. It is worse than useless to lose one's temper under circumstances like these; one can only wait and try to elicit the information from some one else. In order to obtain a real knowledge of the negro, then, it is quite essential that one should enjoy his confidence, and the surest way to prevent doing so is to arrive in his village with an armed escort. In the first place, the mere fact of one's being accompanied by men equipped for war leads him to suppose that one anticipates trouble; and, secondly, the men who comprise the escort are very likely to bully or insult the villagers unbeknown to the white man, who, of course, gets the credit for their aggressions. We could not afford to run the

risk of becoming unpopular at the very outset of our journey, for one's reputation among the natives spreads far in advance in Africa, so we preferred to attempt a perfectly peaceful march to the Lubefu, relying upon tact to save us should any unpleasantness arise. Of course we carried with us our shot-guns and sporting rifles, for these we should need in shooting for the pot or collecting natural history specimens. I arrived in the first of the "doubtful" villages in the pouring rain carried in Hardy's hammock, for I had a sharp attack of fever on the march, and my reception, if not cordial, was certainly not hostile, and, as far as my drowsy condition would allow me to observe, no one paid any particular attention to me. We camped in the village, and except that Torday heard some one making a rather anti-European speech during the night there was nothing to lead one to suppose that the natives were not on the best of terms with the white man. But it was at the next village, Osodu, one day's journey from the Lubefu, where trouble was said to be the most likely to arise. We were not a little surprised, therefore, to find on the morrow that several stalwart natives of Osodu had arrived saying that they heard that a white man was ill upon the road and that they had come to carry him on to their village. This did not look much like the hostility against which we had been cautioned, and when we reached Osodu our reception was of the best. We then learned what had given rise to the magistrate's fears for our safety. The chief of Osodu is subordinate to the more important chief of Mokunji, to whose village



we were travelling. As I have already pointed out, a former chief of Mokunji, by name Okito, had been deposed by the Government, and Jadi, an ex-soldier who had served in the Arab wars, had been appointed by the authorities to take his place as being likely, having fought under the white man, to be friendly in all his dealings with the European. One or two of the petty chiefs of the country had, quite naturally I think, resented this interference on the part of the Government in the matter of the succession to the overlordship of the district and had declined to recognise Jadi as their paramount chief. The authorities having once set Jadi upon his throne, were of course bound to support him, and had therefore threatened the petty chiefs with imprisonment if they persisted in their refusal to acknowledge his suzerainty over them. The chief of Osodu had been obdurate and had accordingly been sentenced to a few months of imprisonment at the Government post of Lubefu. His people were very indignant at this treatment and had been loud in their protests against it; but they realised no doubt that an attack upon white men would not be likely to regain their chief his liberty, so they decided to receive us with open arms and endeavour to enlist our influence on behalf of the prisoner. Their indignation at the treatment of their chief had been the cause of the magistrate's fears for our safety should we enter their village. We had let it be generally known that we belonged to a different "tribe" of white men to the Government officials and to all other European residents in the country, and that we were simply travelling in order to

see the people. We always in future circulated this information about ourselves, and by its means we were able to pick up a lot of information concerning various illegal practices, such as the poison ordeal and cannibalism, which the natives would undoubtedly have withheld from an official.

The village of Osodu is provided with a rest-house for the use of European travellers passing from the Sankuru to the Lubefu, and to this we were conducted by a crowd of villagers accompanied by drummers and bell players. Here we were received by the imprisoned chief's four little sons, aged from about five to ten years, and by the prime minister. The children did the honours at the reception themselves. Dressed in old waistcoats and straw hats and obviously very much got up for the occasion these little fellows presented us with the usual gift of chickens for our evening meal, and, in addition to this, produced a liberal supply of manioc porridge and meat as rations for our men. Torday decided that it would be wise for us to be lavish in our presents to the people of Osodu, so he gave our baby hosts a generous amount of trade goods, drawing from one of the villagers the quaint remark, "These white men are like children, they are so good." The interchange of presents having been accomplished the prime minister proceeded to try to obtain from us a promise to intercede with the Government on behalf of the father of the four little boys who sat gravely staring at us while he spoke. He related to us the circumstances of the chief's imprisonment, and begged us to use the influence, which he was convinced great men such as ourselves must possess, to obtain his

release. We replied that we had no authority whatsoever to meddle in such matters, but Torday promised if occasion arose to put in a word with the authorities on behalf of the village of Osodu.

During the two days we spent there we became quite attached to our little hosts. Their delight with any trifle with which we presented them was so real and so different to the grasping manner with which presents to the negro are often received that it was a real pleasure to give them presents. I remember one of the little fellows beating the ground with his fists in his joy at receiving two or three empty Mannlicher cartridges to hang around his neck! As usual our phonograph created a great impression. After we had given a concert, at which the entire village attended, some one asked us, "What do you call that? Witchcraft?" "Oh, no," modestly replied Torday, "it is only our cleverness." "That is witchcraft," said the native; "cleverness stops short of that." As I was sitting on the edge of the crowd which was listening intently to the phonograph, smoking my pipe and amusing myself by studying the expressions of the natives as the instrument played the record of a laughing song, I noticed that a man squatting on his haunches at the side of my chair was periodically waving his hand with a peculiar sweeping movement towards his face. I was at first quite at a loss to know what he was about, until it suddenly dawned upon me that he was endeavouring to direct into his own mouth the clouds of tobacco smoke that I expelled from my lips! Evidently he had left his pouch at home. The Batetela are great smokers and cultivate tobacco themselves, which they con-

sume in pipes in which the smoke is drawn through water contained in a calabash under the bowl. They take enormous mouthfuls of smoke, so enormous, in fact, that they frequently produce attacks of coughing violent enough to end in a fainting fit, the unfortunate smoker then becoming the object of much mirth and rough chaff from his neighbours.

At Osodu we first saw specimens of the curious pictures in red, black and white, with which the modern Batetela love to decorate the mud wall of their new houses built upon the plan of a bungalow. These represent wild animals, natives armed with bows and arrows attacking others equipped with guns, white men travelling in hammocks accompanied by an escort, and, in one instance, a white man sitting in a chair drinking out of an enormous bottle! Some of the pictures include horses, which the artist must have seen at Lusambo, where three or four of these animals are kept. The drawings are crude in the extreme, but they are none the less curious, especially as the art of drawing is very little practised among the peoples of the Kasai, although, as I shall show later on, wood-carving and the ornamentation of textiles has reached a high pitch of excellence in some parts of the districts. At Osodu, too, we also first saw an object whose very existence many people might be inclined to doubt, namely a basket strainer used in the manufacture of soap. The soap is made of burnt banana roots and is of quite useable quality. As a matter of fact most African natives are by no means uncleanly as regards their persons. When on the march carriers will rarely miss an opportunity to bathe in a stream, and many



A BATETELA DRUMMER.



BATETELA WALL PICTURES.



of those peoples who daub themselves with clay apply fresh earth with such regularity as to cause the practice to be by no means so dirty as it sounds; of course some tribes that we visited were filthy in the extreme, but these were the exception rather than the rule. Upon leaving Osodu, which we did accompanied by the local band and with every sign of goodwill on the part of the inhabitants, we entered a tract of country strongly resembling the downs of Sussex, except that the hollows were as a rule filled with woodland and contained brooks, and the grass was, of course, longer and coarser. The march to the village of Mokunji occupied about three hours. As we came within sight of the village we could see a large crowd waiting to receive us, and we were met by a man bringing us a complimentary present of pine apples and bananas who informed us that the Jadi himself was awaiting our arrival a little farther on. Nearer to the village we met the chief. He was a tall, very powerfully built man, with a heavy unintelligent countenance, dressed in garments from Europe. With him came a number of his wives, his drummers, and a good following of slaves and other inhabitants of Mokunji, while behind him strode an attendant bearing the sole weapon noticeable among the crowd, an old flint-lock pistol, the stock of which was studded with many brass nails, and which was evidently regarded as a state weapon corresponding to the mace of the Lord Mayor's show. We all three shook hands with Jadi, who then preceded us to the rest-house in his village, the drummers accompanying us, and vieing with each other who should get the most noise out of his instrument. The rest-house lay upon the edge of the village on the side nearer

to the Lubefu River, and, in addition to a plaster building useable as a bedroom, there was a thatched shed without walls under the shade of which the white traveller could take his meals sheltered from the sun or rain. It was beneath this shed that we interviewed Jadi and explained to him the object of our visit. A large crowd collected round us in a moment, so that we were able to gather some impression of the people among whom we were to work. Excepting that here and there one could notice a man wearing a scarlet feather, usually drawn from the tail of a grey parrot while the bird is still alive, stuck into the hair on the crown of his head to denote that he had at some time slain a powerful enemy on the field of battle, there was little of interest in the appearance of the male portion of the population, who were all clothed in the imported cotton material which, to my mind, robs the native of any picturesqueness he may possess, though, doubtless, its adoption is a step towards civilisation. The women, however, were more worthy of attention. Their bodies and thighs, which were quite unclothed by the national costume I have already described, were covered with innumerable scars so placed as to form patterns upon their bodies. These cuts had been rubbed with charcoal when first made, with the result that the scars left by them were black and stood out in bold relief from the skins. Some of them must have projected quite half an inch from the ordinary level of the skin. All Batetela women are more or less scarred, this form of ornamentation (if so it can be described) being one of their national characteristics. Most of the peoples of the Congo with whom we came in contact indulge in scarring to some extent, but few cover their bodies so com-



pletely with such marks as do the Batetela women ; curiously enough the men of the tribe are rarely scarred. Among the Tofoke tribe of the Lomami River the men cover their faces, even their lips, with cuts, leaving little round lumps all over their countenances, and we were informed by one of them that the process was not so painful as might be imagined, though, as he remarked, the lips were a bit sore until they had completely healed up! Jadi was evidently disposed to be very friendly towards us. Torday explained to him that we should wish to purchase a large number of locally made objects, and that we hoped the chief would let it be generally known that we would pay fair prices for almost any kind of articles used by the natives, and also that we should be glad if Jadi himself would tell us a little about his land and his people when we came over to visit him, as we intended to do pretty frequently. No sooner had Torday expressed a wish to purchase curios than we were simply overwhelmed by offers to sell every conceivable thing. The crowd thronged round the shed in which we sat, and implored us to buy knives, arrows, spears, charms, head-dresses, masks, stools, musical instruments—in fact everything that the Batetela possess, including a few empty meat tins left behind by a white man! Evidently it was not going to be difficult to lay the foundations of a fairly extensive collection. During the bargaining, in which he himself participated, selling us quite a number of objects, Jadi sneezed ; in a moment every one present was clapping his hands, and saying “ Ah, Ah.” It is, we discovered, a custom among these people always to applaud the chief when he sneezes!

In the cool of the evening, when we had purchased all the articles which seemed at first sight to be worth collecting, we took a stroll round the village. We at once noticed that the place is (or rather was, early in 1908) in a state of transition from a primitive Batetela village to a small town designed after the manner of European settlements in Africa. This change offers an instance of the tendency of the Batetela to embrace any new ideas introduced among them by the white man. The old circular huts were rapidly giving place to buildings of plaster, and these latter were neatly arranged in wide streets radiating from the residence of the chief. The regularity of the way in which the place was planned was a great contrast to the jumble of huts which constitutes the usual African village. Of the number of inhabitants of Mokunji I cannot speak with any certainty; it is a large village as Batetela villages go, but it seems to me to be almost impossible to arrive at the numbers of the male population of any Congo village, unless, of course, one could hold a roll call of the warriors. Among the Batetela every wife has a house of her own, but as most men have more than one wife, and many of them have a good number (it being considered correct for a man of good position to keep up as many establishments as he can afford), the number of huts in a village offers no clue to the number of the male population. I have often marvelled at the statistics so often published of the number of native inhabitants of the Belgian Congo. How are these figures arrived at? And how can they pretend to be even approximately correct? An official census is, I believe, periodically made by the *chefs de poste*, but in most parts of the country the

very whereabouts of many villages is often unknown to the white resident, and even if he could personally visit every hamlet in his district, it would, I should think, be quite impossible for him to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion as to the number of people they contained. If a list of natives is required for purposes of taxation, it is hardly likely that every man will come forward to be enrolled; counting the huts is often, as I have shown, a very uncertain way of getting at the true numbers of the population, and chiefs by no means always tell the truth, especially to an official. Under the circumstances, therefore, I am sure that guesswork must be to a great extent the means by which the figures referred to are arrived at. Torday and I have often hazarded guesses at the number of people inhabiting various villages in which we have stayed some time; our guesses frequently differed from one another to an extraordinary degree. It is, therefore, to be presumed that the opinion of an official who attempts to give an estimate of his population may very likely differ considerably from the opinion of his predecessor in the district. Under these circumstances, I cannot understand how it is possible to form any reliable conclusion as to the increase or decrease of the population. Any one travelling along a Congolese highway may come across ruined or deserted villages, and may thus be led to believe that the numbers of the natives are diminishing. But the people will move their homes to another site for very trifling reasons—one of the forest tribes we visited will abandon a village on the death of any important inhabitant—so the existence of deserted villages cannot, in many cases, be taken into consideration in calculating the number of the natives.

I shall, in the course of my narrative, avoid expressing any opinion as to the numerical strength of the tribes we visited, for I feel that such opinions must be worthless.

We did not, upon this first visit to Jadi, inspect his own residence, but on several subsequent occasions we found opportunities for doing so. There is nothing really remarkable about the dwelling; it consists of a large audience hall with a dais at one end, upon which stands the royal throne—a deck chair decorated with brass-headed nails. At the back of this hall, in an enclosed courtyard, are the huts of the chief's wives. Everything about the dwelling was neat and tidy, but there was nothing really remarkable about the place; even the "fetishes," to which Jadi attaches much importance, and which are situated in the courtyard, consisting only of bowls placed upon stakes driven into the ground. As is usually the case among the peoples of the Kasai, the Batetela do not *worship* their fetishes, but merely regard them as charms which have been endowed by the "medicine-man" with powers to ward off some evil or to produce some good effect. Small fetishes are worn on the person everywhere in the Congo, and Jadi wears some in his hair, which are supposed to warn his head against any plot which may be hatched against it.

Around the village of Mokunji are extensive plantations, for the inhabitants are born agriculturists, and are ready to plant any useful crops which may be introduced among them. As they have come in contact with the influence of both the European and the Arab, and as many of them have served in the army, and thus been able to observe cultivation in widely scattered districts of the Congo, the Batetela have

learned to grow a greater variety of crops than any of the other peoples we visited, so that, the soil of their country being very productive, foodstuffs are readily and cheaply procurable among them; millet, manioc, maize, sweet potatoes, rice, ground-nuts, onions, beans, plantains, and bananas all being cultivated, while a certain amount of quite smokeable tobacco is also grown. As I shall show later on, when describing our wanderings in the equatorial forest, the traveller can always be sure of obtaining a plentiful supply of food for his porters whenever he reaches a village occupied by one of the more advanced sub-tribes of the Batetela nation. We left Jadi after one night spent at his capital town, promising to return to continue our purchase of curios, and proceeded to our destination near the Lubefu, the Kasai Company's factory of Mokunji, which lies about one and a half hour's march to the east of Jadi's village. The factory is built upon the crest of one of the grassy downs which, as I have said, are a feature of this part of the country, and, owing to its exposed position, it is swept by every wind, and is accordingly comparatively cool and healthy. Upon our arrival we were cordially received by the Company's agent, who placed a house at our disposal, wherein we could do our work with the deposed chief whom we had come to visit, and where we could store the objects we collected. We pitched our camp on the edge of the post. Next morning Okitu, the ex-chief of the local Batetela, the predecessor of Jadi, came to call upon us. At the time of our visit he was simply a private individual, devoid of any recognised authority, who had taken up his residence near the factory at the invitation of the agent, who had been struck with his

intelligence and friendly bearing, but, nevertheless, we could see that he really exercised a considerable influence upon a good many of the natives, who, like the people of Osodu, had no great affection for Jadi. Okitu, modest and unassuming though he was, had far more the manner of a chief than the blunt, soldierly, but unintelligent looking man whom we had just visited. He was a thorough native gentleman according to his lights, and had been, so we were informed, a just ruler of his people. Fortunately he took a fancy to Torday, so that he readily consented to assist us in our work of obtaining information about his tribe, with the result that Torday was able to collect a large amount of notes upon a great variety of subjects. For the following five or six weeks Okitu visited us almost daily, and we talked by the hour of the history of his nation, of the Arab wars, of his religion, of the daily life of the people, and other such subjects interesting to the student of ethnology. He told us how his ancestors had come from the north out of the great forest; how, when they reached the Lubefu River, a difficulty as to the leadership had arisen, and a fetish-man had said that he who would command them must lay his right hand upon a stone, and, at one blow, cut off his forefinger with an axe; how the first Mokunji had done this, and had led his tribe over the river to the land of the Basonge, and had, by force of arms, driven the latter to the Sankuru, wresting from them the country in which we then were. He told us how the influence of the Arab slave dealers had gradually crept in from the north-east, dominating even the northern portions of the Batetela tribe, until it reached the Lubefu; how a weak ruler of Mokunji had

allowed himself to be persuaded to acknowledge the Arabs' sway, but how his successor had called his warriors round him, and appealing in 1891 for aid to the white man, newly arrived at Lusambo, had risen against the oppressor and freed his people from the curse of Arab suzerainty with the horrors of its slave trade.

All this, and much more, of the history of his people Okitu told us as Torday plied him with questions, while I noted down the facts as he narrated them, Hardy being busily employed the while with his brushes, depicting types of natives and landscapes, or making accurate diagrams of the patterns of the women's scars. But it was not only with the history of the Batetela that we were concerned, and Okitu soon learned to trust us sufficiently to confide in us many things about the habits of his people which he would never have told to any one connected with the Government. We freely discussed the question of cannibalism. It appears that among the Batetela, as among the Basonge, the practice of eating human flesh is rapidly dying out, but a few years ago it was extremely prevalent. Prisoners of war and enemies slain on the battlefield were invariably eaten, and numbers of the Batetela tribe who had been convicted of murder were often handed over to some village other than their own to expiate their crimes by serving as a meal to their fellow-tribesmen. Even to this day certain loathsome practices, survivals of cannibalism, obtain at Mokunji which are too revolting to European ears to be described here. In the old days it was the privilege of the chief to maim and mutilate his subjects according to the dictates of his own sweet will, but happily this

custom has given way before the advance of civilisation. We discussed with Okitu every possible subject from the gruesome practices I have mentioned to such simple domestic matters as to who is the actual owner of the crops and what are the laws of inheritance. It appears that the foodstuffs grown on the soil cultivated by the women belong actually to the wives, but they must feed their husbands, for, as Okitu naively remarked, "A man does not love his wife nearly so much when there is no food in the house." As regards inheritance we learned that among the Bate-tela, as among many African peoples, widows are inherited according to the same law as the dead man's other household goods! During our stay at the factory we several times visited Jadi's village, and also interviewed many prominent natives, taking every opportunity of checking Okitu's statements and assuring ourselves of their veracity. One of the men we questioned was quite a remarkable personage. His name was Umbi Enungu, and he boasted that he was the oldest living member of the Batetela tribe. What right he had to make this statement it is, of course, quite impossible to ascertain, but it is certain that he was very old indeed, so old that he could only walk for a very short distance without resting, and required assistance when rising from a sitting position. This latter infirmity turned out to be rather a good thing for us. We one day played over to the old man some phonograph records, including a newly made record in which Jadi had made a few remarks concerning the history of his people. Umbi Enungu was deeply interested in the songs to which we treated him, but when he heard the record of Jadi's speech his interest





AN OLD-FASHIONED BATETELA HUT.



JADI AND SOME OF HIS WIVES.



changed in a moment to fury. Apparently Jadi had made some slight mistake with regard to an incident which, though it had occurred in the dark ages, was still fresh in the memory of old Enungu. This error filled the old man with indignation. Seizing a spear which lay at hand, and hurling insults at the head of Jadi and at the phonograph, he strove frantically to rise, expressing his intention of smashing up a machine which could tell such lies. Fortunately his age prevented his getting to his feet to carry out his threats, and we quickly put a stop to the playing of the offending record. The old fellow was then conducted to a shady spot where he could sit down quietly and recover his composure. For some time he sat in silence, making signs about his person with some magic seeds produced from the cat's-skin bag containing his "medicine," without which he never moved, and finally he departed evidently still much disturbed in mind. He did condescend to visit us frequently after this incident, however, and he contrived to extort from us a good number of presents, on the receipt of which he would express his pleasure by feebly endeavouring to dance, and by spitting freely in the direction of our feet.

At the time of our visit to Mokunji the height of the grass, which is not burnt off until about May, prevented our indulging in hunting, and accordingly we brought back very little in the way of natural history specimens from this country. As a matter of fact the list of big game animals of the district is extraordinarily meagre. The antelope family is represented by bushbucks, duikers, and another beast smaller than the bush-

buck, a skin of which I was never able to see, so I cannot say to what species it belongs; the red river hog is common round Mokunji, and leopards are very numerous. Buffalo and elephant are conspicuous by their absence, though a solitary buffalo bull was killed near the Lubefu in 1907; it belonged to one of the small brown species of forest buffalo. Owing to the scarcity of other prey leopards have taken to man-eating with disastrous results to the villages between the Lubefu River and Jadi's capital. As many as five people—all of them women—were killed in one day within a radius of ten miles from the Kasai Company's factory, and shortly before our visit a leopard had attacked a chief on the road at sundown as he was returning home after a visit to the Company's agent. The animal had sprung upon the chief from the high grass by the roadside, but upon becoming aware that he was attended by a considerable following, it had left its victim on the ground little the worse for his adventure. At Mokunji we were lucky enough to secure a living specimen of the mysterious "Yuka," which had so roused our curiosity at Batempa. Tempted by the high price which Torday offered, the entire population of a hamlet turned out one night and surrounded a tree in which the animal had been heard to give vent to its weird cry; then two young warriors, evidently anxious to display their courage, had climbed the tree and captured the beast. It turned out to be a species of hyrax, which, though not unknown to science, was represented in the Natural History Museum by one skin only, sent home years ago by Emin Pasha. Its ferocity was just as much a myth as its habit of climbing with its

back to the tree! In less than half-an-hour after its release from the basket in which it was brought to us it was eating out of our hands. We obtained later on a second living specimen of this hyrax, but both of them died before Hardy could take them with him to Europe. In the Lubefu River crocodiles are said to exist, but hippopotami are only to be found in it at its confluence with the Sankuru, for the current of the Lubefu is too strong for these animals; so strong indeed is the stream, and so narrow and winding its course, that a whaleboat, well-manned with experienced paddlers, takes nineteen days to ascend the river from Bena Dibele to the Government station of Lubefu, a distance of only about one hundred miles. In places the stream is so overhung by trees that it flows as through a tunnel beneath their intertwining branches. The road from Mokunji to the station of Lubefu crosses the river by one of those suspension bridges made of creepers (known to the Belgians as "monkey bridges") which the Batetela are so skilful in building. The creepers are attached to trees on either bank, and high railings on each side of the tight-rope-like bridge prevent one from being hurled into the river when the structure sways beneath one's weight.

During our stay at Mokunji we not only made extensive collections for the ethnographical department of the British Museum, but we were able to procure a number of human skulls for the Royal College of Surgeons. We experienced no difficulty in obtaining these, for the inhabitants did not hesitate to collect for us the skulls of those who had perished in the bush from the deadly sleeping sickness. When a

person is known to have this terrible disease the Batetela expel him from the village, placing food at a certain spot each day until the fact that the food is not called for shows that the poor wretch's sufferings are at an end. We have met several of these unfortunates when on the march, one of them a little girl in the last stage of the complaint, who presented a most pitiful spectacle, and filled us with horror at the thought of her terrible fate. But is not this primitive isolation, cruel as it may seem, the only possible way by which savages can combat the spread of sleeping sickness? The patient's end must be horrible, that lonely death in the bush, but it may be the means of saving the lives of hundreds in the villages. The collecting of the skulls was the last piece of work that we did at Mokunji, for we were afraid that to mention such an idea as to purchase the bones of their dead might so offend the Batetela as to prevent them from imparting to us a lot of the information with regard to their manners and customs which we were so anxious to obtain. This, however, did not turn out to be the case; in fact the prices we paid for the skulls—after a large reward had been offered for the first one or two—were lower than those asked for many of the other things we purchased, so that we were enabled to send home quite a valuable series of them to the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. Our ethnographical work having been completed as far as possible and our collections made, we packed up the specimens (now amounting to several hundred) and despatched them to the Sankuru on their way to Europe. We then prepared to follow them, intending to proceed to Batempa and thence descend the Sankuru to Lusambo.

During our stay at Mokunji, Commandant Gustin, the Commissioner of the District of Luabala-Kasai, had passed by on his way to his residence at Lusambo after an extended tour through the eastern portion of his district, and Torday was anxious to discuss with him one or two ethnographical subjects in which he was greatly interested. We therefore determined to stay for a few days at Lusambo. When we met the Commandant we laid before him the grievance of the natives of Osodu, and we had the satisfaction of being instrumental in the release of the father of our baby hosts, for the Commissioner considered that the chief of Osodu could be safely set at liberty upon the understanding that he must acknowledge the suzerainty of Jadi, which he was now ready to do.

Once again our march was to be rendered interesting by rumours of wars, although, luckily for us, the trouble never reached the stage of actual hostilities. Jadi and Kasongo Batetela fell out over the suzerainty of two or three small villages situated upon their mutual frontier; and, as neither chief would give way nor appeal to the Government for arbitration, a breach of the peace seemed certain. Jadi beat his big war drum at Mokunji and sent messages by gong, signalling to the outlying villages to bid their warriors hold themselves in readiness to take the field. This signalling was especially interesting to us, in that it enabled us to see how perfectly a chief keeps in communication with his army by means of the signalling gong. This instrument, of which I give an illustration and of which specimens are now in the British Museum, is made from a solid block of wood, hollowed out with a primitive form of adze. It is hung round the

drummer's shoulder by a leather strap, and is thus easily portable, and can be used in directing military operations or for sending the chief's orders while he is travelling. The words are transmitted by a series of beats, or rather sharp "taps," of a couple of rubber-headed sticks. The sounds thus produced, though not very loud, are very penetrating, so that messages can be easily distinguished at a distance of several miles, and when passed on from one village to another (there are always plenty of people able to use the gong) can be sent all over the countryside in an incredibly short space of time. The perfection to which this system of signalling has been brought by the Batetela astonished us very much, and we put it to every test that we could think of. We gonged messages from the Kasai Company's factory to Jadi's village, always receiving a reply which indicated that our message had been correctly sent, and Torday and I, each accompanied by a signaller, on several occasions carried on conversations at a distance of over a quarter of a mile apart—far enough to test the efficacy of the system. Altogether the Batetela gong is one of the most remarkable instruments in Central Africa, and, where villages are fairly close together and so facilitate the transmission of messages, it could easily be made use of as a substitute to the telegraph lines, which, of course, have not yet made their appearance so far in the interior. But although Jadi (and for that matter Kasongo Batetela) had such perfect means of summoning their warriors and of directing the movements of the various contingents from outlying villages, their dispute came to an end without bloodshed. Jadi, the ex-soldier, the veteran of the Arab wars, the leader of so many warriors





SOUNDING THE SIGNALING GONG.



armed with guns—Jadi, the more powerful chief of the two, gave way. Why? Simply because his people, though in superior numbers, felt that they with their muzzle-loaders would be no match for Kasongo's old warriors, who were renowned for their accuracy of aim with the poisoned arrow. The young Batetela loves to take the road with his gun (usually carried by his wife or child), and he uses the weapon too in hunting; but he realises the superiority of the veteran archer when it comes to the serious business of the battlefield. A good bow used by a man who has been brought up to its use since childhood is always better than an inferior muzzle-loader in the hands of a native whose ideas of shooting are usually extremely rudimentary. Accordingly, the more primitive tribes are by no means necessarily so easy to tackle as their neighbours who have attained that state of "civilisation" which includes a gun as one of its outward signs. Our journey to the Sankuru, therefore, passed off without incident, and we reached Batampa well pleased with the result of our researches among the Batetela and with the collections we had made for the British Museum. We spent only a few days in the Kasai Company's factory by the riverside, and as soon as our old friend the *Velde* appeared, bringing stores and a European mail from Dima, we embarked in her and departed for Lusambo at noon one day in the end of February 1908.

## CHAPTER III

### IN A BUSHONGO VILLAGE

THE run from Batempa to Lusambo, aided by the strong stream of the Sankuru, occupied but a few hours, and we reached the capital of the district of Lualaba-Kasai well before sundown. We immediately landed our baggage and called upon the Commissioner of the District to inquire where we could sleep. Commandant Gustin courteously placed a house at our disposal, with a small yard or garden at the back where we could pitch our tents, using the building as a store for the rest of our baggage. That evening, as it was too late to prepare a meal of our own, we were invited to dinner with the Government officials at their mess. The Commissioner of the District, the officer commanding the troops, and the magistrate and his assistants each take their meals in their own houses, but all the other officials dine in the mess-room, where Commandant Saut, the Deputy-Commissioner, takes the head of the table. This gentleman introduced us to his subordinates in a lengthy and rather flattering speech, after which we sat down to a good square meal, which included the rare luxury of beef, for Lusambo is one of the very few places in the Kasai district where cattle are kept. Next morning we wandered round the Government station. All the bungalows are built of brick and are commodious and

weatherproof; they are laid out in streets, each house having its small garden, the trees of which afford a certain amount of shade to the highway. The house of the Commissioner of the District, which stands just to the west of the other buildings upon an eminence overlooking the river, is the only one which boasts of an upper storey. With the exception of one or two Roman Catholic missionaries the whole population of Lusambo is made up entirely of Government officials, including the Commissioner and his Deputy, the judge and his subordinates, a lieutenant and an N.C.O., transport officials, armourers, secretaries, &c., to the total number of about fifteen. There are no ladies at Lusambo. For the use of the Commissioner two or three ponies are kept. These come, I believe, from the Welle district, and a couple of colts have been bred at Lusambo, but, owing to the numerous swamps and streams necessitating log bridges in the country round, the use of the horses when travelling is seldom if ever resorted to, and they appear to be kept rather as an experiment in horse-breeding than for actual work, though of course they are used for "hacking" round the station. In the course of our wanderings round Lusambo we visited the quarters of the native troops, of whom about one hundred and fifty are kept at the headquarters of the district, together with a couple of very light field guns, which are carried in sections by porters when on service. The men are very well housed, their buildings being of brick, and very comfortable compared with the straw or plaster huts occupied by soldiers in remote stations, which, in turn, are superior to the dwellings the men were used to in their villages before they

enlisted. Some of the older men have furnished their quarters quite neatly with substantial beds, upon which spotless blankets and sheets of cotton material are spread, and in many instances crucifixes are to be found upon the walls. One hut that I went into unexpectedly to change a camera film was a perfect model of cleanliness and order. The black population of Lusambo must be enormous, but consisting as it does of natives of several different tribes it does not inhabit one large town, but a number of separate villages scattered around the Europeans' settlement. Where the people of so many tribes are brought into daily contact with one another it is certain that many tribal customs are exchanged among them or, under the influence of the "civilisation" introduced by the presence of the white officials and the missionaries, many customs totally disappear. A residence, therefore, in a big centre like Lusambo can be of little value to any one desiring to study the primitive life of the natives, but for the artist in search of models the place offers a wonderful selection of various negro types. We therefore spent some days at Lusambo giving Hardy an opportunity of making some portrait studies before going on to the eastern part of the Bushongo country.

Around Lusambo are to be found villages inhabited by Batetela, Basonge, Babinji, Baluba, and Bushongo, the latter being the real inhabitants of the district. In addition to these, there is a very large mixed population of natives belonging to no particular village, who are generally termed Baluba by the white men of the Kasai, but who in reality belong to that tribe no more than to any other. These people are the "undesirable aliens" who frequent nearly

every big centre. Their existence is a curse to the Kasai district. When the Arab slave raiders were finally put down their slaves had to find homes somewhere, and accordingly settled in places such as Lusambo; many of them who had been born in slavery or who had been captured as infants did not even know to what country they originally belonged; they had no villages; they owed allegiance to no chiefs. They were, mentally, far below the average free man of a primitive tribe. These unfortunates have settled in places like Lusambo and Luebo, and have there produced children of a type as debased as themselves. Add to this population the riff-raff of the district—men who had to leave their village for the village good and have fled to the centre of Government to avoid the vengeance of their chiefs, “domestic” slaves whose idleness has induced their masters to ill-treat them, thieves, murderers, runaway workmen from factories, and loose women—add these to the number of freed slaves and you have the “undesirable alien” population of places like Lusambo.

These miserable creatures for some reason or other, probably because in their chequered careers they have seen more of the world than the ordinary native of the villages, consider themselves superior to the simple tribesmen, and lose no opportunity of sneering at him and his ways. They despise him and he hates and despises them. Unfortunately a very large percentage of workmen employed in Government stations and factories are drawn from this lowest caste of native. It is often quite impossible to obtain workmen from the local tribe, so the agent who

requires labour has to recruit it in some big centre where any number of these so-called Baluba are always to be found ready to work when their resources are at an end. Unless very carefully watched these gentry will probably cause trouble with the natives in the district in which they are employed. In the cases of factories being attacked, white men murdered or molested, or some other "outrage" on the part of the local natives, which are by no means so infrequent as might be supposed, the cause can nearly always be traced to the white man's followers, his Baluba. They are overbearing until real trouble arises, and then they desert their master and run. A sure way for the traveller to find difficulties is to employ a large number of such men and not to keep them perfectly under control. They swagger into the villages, call the inhabitants "bushmen" (Basenshi), and threaten to turn the anger of their master upon the people if they do not supply them with everything they ask for. With such men, too, endless disputes about women are certain to arise. These so-called Baluba must not be confused with the real Baluba, a fine warrior race inhabiting the south-eastern part of the Belgian Congo. I have used for them the name by which they are generally known to the white men of the district, and as our work did not take us into the country of the real Baluba, and I shall therefore have little or nothing to say about these people, I have not tried to invent a special term for the riff-raff of the big towns. The Arabs called them "Ruga-Ruga."

What the future of these people is to be is extremely difficult to imagine. It is one thing for the white man to



introduce his civilisation and his religion into a community such as an ordinary native tribe, which has its own laws and customs often convertible to those of a European, but it is quite a different task to attempt the reformation of a heterogeneous mass of scoundrels to whom law and order are utterly distasteful. If taken when quite young the children of these Baluba could doubtless be made to grow into useful members of society, but I am afraid that until the present generation has died out it will continue to be a curse to the country.

I have mentioned the "freed" slaves of the Arabs and the "domestic" slaves of the natives. It may not be out of place to say here a few words upon the great difference between the old-time slave trade and the system of domestic slavery which obtains to-day all over the Kasai district, and which will, I think, continue to exist for a long time to come. The horrors of the slave trade, with its burned villages, its massacres, and the terrible sufferings of the victims on the road, are well known to most people, but many are apt to confuse the capture and sale of slaves with the state of "domestic slavery," which is, not infrequently, a condition by no means more terrible than that of domestic service in Europe. Of course the life of the slave in one tribe differs considerably from his lot in another. Among the Bankutu of the great forest, as I shall show later on, slaves are invariably eaten, and in many districts it has been customary to bury slaves alive at the funeral of some important personage; but, on the other hand, in the case of most tribes, the master is obliged to provide his slave with a house and even with a wife; and at the court of the King

of the Bushongo, as my narrative will show, some of the highest positions are held by slaves, and cases are not rare nowadays of a slave being allowed to marry a free woman. The work done by the slave of an ordinary native of a primitive tribe appears to consist solely of hunting, building, or cultivating for his master, and the amount of it they have to do is by no means great. In fact in most instances, I think, the lot of a domestic slave compares favourably with that of the "maid-of-all-work" of a London suburb. Among people with whom gambling is the besetting sin it is quite common for a man who has risked and lost his all to finally stake his family and even his own liberty upon the game and thus become the slave of the winner; this occurs frequently among the Bambala of the Kwilu. There is, however, another side to the question of domestic slavery which has been brought into existence by the low class Baluba referred to above. Such of these people as possess sufficient means will often purchase a slave and then compel him to enter the employ of the white man. At the end of his term of service the slave has to hand over to his master all the goods that he has earned. Of course in theory all the slave has to do is to call upon a Government official—a magistrate, if there is one within reach, or, failing him, any *chef de poste*—who will at once tell him that his earnings are his own, as slavery no longer exists, and therefore his master has no right to any of his possessions; but in practice this does not work out as well as it might if the country were more effectually occupied by greater numbers of Government officials. The slave very rarely appeals to the official, for he knows that he would be ill-

treated and robbed as soon as he returned to the village of his master, and that the white man would be powerless to prevent this. One would imagine that no slave, unless he were an absolute fool, would ever return within reach of his master when he has earned a good sum in the white man's employ, but as a rule he does so, and therefore it is largely his own fault if he is robbed. My own "boy" Sam is a case in point. We discovered that he was a slave of a Bushongo of Lusambo, and we frequently advised him not to return to Lusambo when he left our service. He was fully determined, however, to do so; he had a sister and many friends in the neighbourhood. We pointed out carefully to him that if any attempt was made to rob him of his pay he must at once call upon the authorities, and, before sailing for Europe, we handed over the considerable sum which he had earned to Mr. Westcott, the missionary at Inkongu, who kindly consented to act as the lad's banker, as we had done for the last two years. In this way he could scarcely be robbed, but in the case of the ordinary workman returning from a factory such precautions are well-nigh impossible. In addition to this, the slave often has a great dislike to appealing to the white man for protection against his master. Sam expressed his intention of voluntarily paying to his master the usual price of a slave (not a large sum), and in this we encouraged him, for though it was legally quite unnecessary we considered the idea a very fair one, as domestic slavery, repugnant as it is to our ideas of liberty, is one of the accepted principles of negro life, and we felt that by thus redeeming himself the boy would be acting honourably to his master. The idea

originated from Sam himself, and, I think, does him credit. The large centres, such as Lusambo and Luebo, are hotbeds of this kind of slavery, and it is very difficult, if not quite impossible, to prevent it. When we remember that even in civilised capitals blackguards are to be found living upon the illgotten gains of their fellow-creatures, and the best efforts of modern police systems have been powerless to stamp out the evil, it is perhaps not surprising that a very similar state of affairs should exist in the heart of Africa, where the Government is, in my opinion at any rate, considerably undermanned.

Even to this day "razzias," or raids for the capture of slaves, occasionally take place in the south-western part of the Congo. Usually the offenders belong to the Badjok tribe, occupying part of the frontier between Angola and the Belgian Congo, with whom we came into contact at the end of our journey. We met an officer who had surprised and defeated a caravan of these scoundrels; but the old-time slave-trade is practically dead in the country of which I am writing.

I have tried to point out that slavery in the Southern Congo can be divided into three kinds—the slave trade as introduced by the Arabs; the pernicious system of letting out slaves existing among the riff-raff of the big centres; and the often innocuous and very prevalent system of domestic slavery which obtains in the primitive villages. Detailed discussions of the status of the domestic slave in the various tribes among whom Torday has worked will be found in the scientific record of this journey which he and Mr. Joyce are publishing, and also in various papers by

them which have appeared in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* ; it will therefore be unnecessary for me to deal at greater length with this question in my narrative of our wanderings in the Kasai.

The market of Lusambo is held every Sunday in a large open space just to the north of the European quarter. The crowd is enormous, and, as is usual with negro crowds, rather unpleasant to the white man's olfactory organ ; but it is interesting in the extreme. Foodstuffs preponderate among the articles offered for sale, and these were of sufficient variety to tempt the appetite of any negro gourmet ; manioc, maize, millet, dried locusts, caterpillars, young rats (in the pink stage and held together on wooden skewers), and a host of other delicacies were laid out upon leaves on the ground, and around them eager crowds of natives (male and female) added their voices to the general hum as they loudly bargained for their week's supply of stores. The haggling over prices was keen, but we saw no sign of any disturbance, and we were told that trouble in the market is extremely rare. The buyers and sellers themselves varied in appearance as much as did the goods over which they were arguing. One noticed a tall sergeant from the Welle, with an almost Arab type of countenance, elbowing his way between red-painted, scantily clothed women of the real Baluba people from across the Sankuru, upon the head of one of whom a tall plume of feathers denoted that she had recently given birth to a child ; here and there a stately elder of the local Bushongo tribe could be seen, easily distinguishable by his dignified manner and refined features from the crowd of riff-raff slaves by which he was

surrounded. Sometimes one sees in the market of Lusambo one of the most frightful members of the human family, an albino negro. We noticed two of these freaks. One, a small boy with a deathly white skin and white woolly hair, was not so ugly as a grown-up man, whose face seemed to possess every characteristic which exists in the negro countenance horribly accentuated by the pallor of his complexion. His face was almost inhuman and, once seen, is likely never to be forgotten.

There are no booths or shelters of any kind in the market-place, all the dealing being carried on in the open, the wares being displayed on the ground. We found little to interest us in those of the villages constituting the native quarters of Lusambo, which we found time to explore; they were all modern in design, with plaster huts, and bore no resemblance to the national form of village of the tribes which inhabited them. But we were able to do some ethnographical work among the local branch of the Bushongo tribe, whose kinsmen of Misumba we were shortly to visit. A large number of these people came to see us at our residence, and Torday lost no opportunity of interrogating them. One of them turned out to be a very old and important personage—the prime minister of the Bushongo of Lusambo. This old fellow, now very decrepit and nearly blind, remembered perfectly the arrival of the first white man upon the Sankuru. One day the natives of Lusambo had been terrified by the apparition on the river of a huge canoe, breathing fire as it advanced; they fled from the banks of the stream, believing that some devil had descended upon them. Then they noticed that one of the white men, of whose existence

they had heard, was standing in the bow of the vessel waving cloth to them, so a few of the bolder spirits remained by the riverside to await his arrival. When the white man landed, they discovered that he was not only flesh and blood, but agreeable as well, as our aged informant quaintly put it.

Among the Bushongo of Lusambo the use of a red dye made from a wood locally called "tukula" is very prevalent. Although, as is only natural in a large place where imported goods are so easily obtainable, loin-cloths of European cotton-stuffs are to some extent replacing the old-time material made of the fibre of the raphia leaf, but this imported cotton is almost invariably dyed red with the "tukula," which is also plentifully applied to the bodies and hair of the Bushongo. It gives them a very picturesque appearance. Several little girls, about five or six years old, used to come to visit us at meal-times, when we regaled them with lumps of sugar and other delicacies, and really very pretty they were with white cowrie shells plaited into the front of their "tukula" dyed hair, ropes of blue glass beads hanging around their necks, and their little bodies freshly covered with the red dye. We made great friends with these children, as indeed we always endeavoured to do with the little ones of every village we visited, and Hardy painted one or two charming portraits of them. The tukula is so commonly used by all the Bushongo people, about whom I shall have a good deal to say later on, that I must give my reader some idea of what it is and where it comes from. The tree is a large one, growing in many parts of the equatorial forest north of the Sankuru; its

wood is hard and very heavy. In colour it is about maroon. When rotten the wood is rubbed into powder on a stone and then, mixed with oil, is applied to the hair, body, or clothes. We brought home several small logs of this wood, after our journey in the forest, and it appears to be camwood. I have had a little of it made up into small articles of furniture, and it is certainly very ornamental, but its great weight prevents large pieces of it being brought to the river, where only human portage is available. The Bushongo to the south of the Sankuru import large quantities of their wood from the tribes of the great forest. While at Lusambo we made friends with a very intelligent lad belonging to the Bushongo tribe, and we were anxious to engage him as an additional "boy," with a view to obtaining further information from him about the manners and customs of his people. One of our servants noticed, however, that the glands behind his ears were slightly swollen, an early symptom of sleeping sickness, so we could not imperil the rest of our party by taking him with us. None of the Bushongo, as I was presently able to discover, are famous for their skill in hunting, and therefore they, in common with other peoples who live around Lusambo, employ a race of dwarfs, known as the Batwa, to kill game for them in the forest. These people are extremely interesting, and we were fortunate enough to meet with a party of them while staying at Lusambo. They very rarely visit the centre of government, but one of the chiefs who employs them had been requested to bring a few to see us. This he did with some difficulty, for the Batwa are true children of the forest, and hate the crowds and bustle



of Lusambo, but he could not induce them to stay more than one day, and the most extravagant offers on our part failed to persuade one of them to accompany us in the capacity of hunter. Six Batwa, all full-grown men, came to see us. They appeared to vary from about four feet eight inches to five feet in height, and looked extremely wiry. Their costumes consisted of a couple of monkey skins suspended from their belts, one in front and one behind, so that the tails dragged upon the ground, and they wore tiny antelope horns as charms around their necks. Each carried a bow and a bundle of poisoned arrows "feathered" with simple leaves. They were very reticent in talking to us, but when we suggested a little archery practice in the back garden they brightened up considerably. We put up a small lemon (some two inches in diameter) to serve as a mark, and the shooting was conducted at a range of about fifteen yards. The accuracy of their aim was astonishing, and they appeared to thoroughly enjoy the proceedings, chaffing the man whose arrow flew a few inches wide of the lemon, and applauding with grunts the successful shot. These people have no settled villages, living a nomad's life in the forest, sleeping under temporary shelters built of leaves, and moving their camp according to the movements of game. They supply their overlord with meat. Their success in hunting is largely due to the extraordinary skill with which they can creep up to within a few yards of a sleeping animal and then carefully place a poisoned arrow, to the deadly effects of which the beast shortly succumbs. I noticed that the knees of some of the Batwa who visited us were worn as if by much crawling.

In addition to larger game they kill great numbers of monkeys and birds with their arrows.

Near Misumba we came across other settlements of these Batwa, but south of the Sankuru they attain to a greater stature than those who inhabit the great forest, and Torday, at his lecture at the Royal Geographical Society, has pointed out that this may very probably be due to the more open, and therefore more airy and sunny, nature of their surroundings. The Bushongo are firm in the belief that the forest trees opened and gave birth to the original Batwa; one of the quaint legends which make the folk-lore of the Bushongo so interesting. About this time, when we were desirous of moving on from Lusambo to the country of the eastern Bushongo, a small Government steamer was about to go down the Sankuru to take an official to Luebo. Commandant Gustin kindly gave us permission to travel in this vessel, thus saving us the extra time which a canoe journey would have entailed. We therefore, after only a brief stay at the chief town of the Kasai district, continued our journey, glad to move on to a spot more suitable for our work, but remembering with gratitude the hospitality which had been accorded to us by the Commissioner of the District and his subordinates. The *Schlagerstrom* (the vessel in which we travelled) was in reality nothing but a launch in which there was only sufficient sleeping accommodation for the captain and the Government official who was going to Luebo. We therefore encamped by the riverside when the vessel was moored for the night, a proceeding to which our weary voyage from Dima to Batempa had well accustomed us. We stopped at a little



BATWA DWARFS.



A STREET IN MISUMBA.



fuel-station called Gandu (or "crocodile"), on the left bank of the river a few miles below the now disused trading post of Isaka (which is marked upon the map accompanying this volume), and here Hardy disembarked with most of our baggage, leaving Torday and me to proceed a little farther in the steamer to search for the burial-place of an Englishman who had perished in the Sankuru some years before. Commandant Gustin had requested us to try and find the exact locality of the grave amid the ruins of the factory, to clear it of grass, and to secure photos of the spot to be sent to the dead man's family. Upon reaching the site of the factory, however, we were unable in the time at our disposal to find out exactly where the grave was situated, and we could see no local native fisherman, who would doubtless have been able to take us straight to the place; we therefore had to return to Hardy, unsuccessful in our search.

The voyage on the *Schlagerstrom* was by no means unpleasant, and we struck up quite a friendship with the captain, a German who had served in the Kaiser's navy on board, I believe, the royal yacht. This man was extremely fond of animals, and his pet at the time we knew him was an ordinary and very skinny domestic chicken! The bird used to perch upon his boot as he sat with his knees crossed directing his helmsman from his easy chair, and took all its food from his hand. A few months later the *Schlagerstrom*, her captain, and all her crew (with the exception of one man) were hurled to eternity down the falls of the Congo just below Stanley Pool. A terrible end for a man whose kindly nature and unassuming manners made him univer-

sally popular among the Europeans with whom he came in contact, and who was deservedly liked by his native crew. When Hardy landed at Gandu, we had despatched a messenger to the Kasai Company's agent at Misumba requesting him to ask the local Bushongo chief to send porters to carry our loads to the village, so we had not long to wait at the fuel-station before the men arrived. We had heard that buffalo and elephant existed in fair numbers around Misumba, so we were in high hopes of obtaining some shooting, hopes which were still further raised when the porters told us that an elephant had been killed by means of a trap in the neighbourhood not long before, and when, in the village at which we broke our journey to Misumba, we were shown the tomb of a man who had held a great reputation as an elephant hunter. Marching at a fair pace a European can reach Misumba from Gandu in one long day; but we preferred to halt for the night at the village of Zappo-Lubumba, a Basongo-Meno settlement about seven or eight miles south of the river on the edge of the great grassy plains that lie behind the belt of woodland which clothes the banks of the Sankuru. The track through the forest is considerably broken by swamps, some of them of sufficient width to necessitate the use of a dug-out. For a time no canoe could be obtained, for the people of Zappo-Lubumba were evidently not disposed to be very friendly, but at last, after sending several messengers to him, we prevailed upon the chief to cause his subjects to ferry us over the water, and we pitched our tents that night in the broad, picturesque street of his village. These Basongo-Meno of the left bank of the Sankuru belong to the great tribe of

that name who inhabit the right bank of the Kasai and Sankuru. They have adopted Bushongo dress and ways, and to outward appearance differ in no respect from the Bushongo inhabitants of Misumba, but between the two villages there is a good deal of ill-feeling and their inhabitants rarely exchange visits. At Misumba we heard dark tales of border warfare between them: how in the dead of the night, usually during a tornado, the Basongo-Meno would creep into outlying Bushongo villages and murder the people as they slept, the noise of their coming passing unnoticed in the roar of the storm, and the rain removing all traces of the direction of their flight should pursuit be attempted in the morning. The Basongo-Meno, even here to the south of the river, are by no means friendly to the European, but they are not sufficiently numerous to oppose him as effectually as have their brethren on the right bank, whose ferocity has caused their country to be a *terra incognita* to the white man even to this day.

Next morning we proceeded to march the sixteen or seventeen miles through the plains that lay between Zappo-Lubumba and Misumba. The day was extremely hot and the road for the most part entirely devoid of shade, so our faces soon began to wear that peculiar sneering grin which intense heat produces by contracting the skin on the cheeks. We were not without music on the way, for one of the porters had made a horn of the stem of a pawpaw tree upon which he attempted some ghastly imitations of bugle calls, learned, doubtless, at Lusambo. This pawpaw stem was capable of producing quite a clear note like that of a coach horn. The track through the plains was of the ordinary

native kind ; that is to say, it was only a few inches wide and very tortuous, for the negro will always walk round a stick dropped on the path rather than kick it out of his way, and accordingly everything dropped on the road causes a fresh bend to appear in the way. About midway between Zappo's village and Misumba, a mile or so to the west of the road, we noticed for the first time one of the volcanic crevices which are quite a feature of this country. Seen from the track the earth upon the side of a grassy slope appears to have been cut away as if with a gigantic shovel, leaving a quarry-like excavation about two hundred feet deep, and a little over a quarter of a mile in length. The earth in this hole was red in colour, and at the base of it was an extensive patch of woodland containing, as I learned later when exploring the place, a lake. There is a queer legend concerning the origin of this crevice. About seventy years ago a chief of Misumba was proceeding to Zappo-Lubumba to attend some important ceremony, and on the way he encountered two dwarfs, who instead of saluting him with that respect which a chief of the aristocratic Bushongo people considered his due, passed him by without so much as a word. The chief, in anger, had them stopped and brought before him. On being asked why they had failed to salute so important a personage they gave some impertinent answer which so angered the chief's escort that they killed the dwarfs forthwith. No sooner were they slain than the chief fell down dead. The dwarfs had been wizards. The Bushongo who were accompanying the chief were naturally infuriated at their master's death, and, imagining that the Basongo-Meno people had sent the wizards to kill him,



they hastened on to Zappo's village, and there took vengeance by stealing goats. On their way home they were startled to find that the chief's body had vanished, and that a mountain had arisen where it had lain by the roadside! Not very long afterwards a second Bushongo chief passed along the same track. When he reached the newly made hill he paused and poured out the vials of his wrath upon it, cursing it with a fine flow of Bushongo rhetoric; a peal of supernatural laughter interrupted him, and in a moment the hill had disappeared, swallowing up the second chief and leaving in its place the crevice and lake which now exist on the spot. Such is the legend of the earthquake as told to-day at Misumba. During our stay in this country we felt one slight shock on April 1, 1908, and this same shock was felt in the great forest as far north as the Lomela River within a few hours of the same time. Crevices such as the one I have described are quite common in this country, usually marking the sources of small streams. After searching for about fourteen miles we passed, but did not enter, a small village inhabited by the Batwa who hunt for the chief of Misumba, and then entered a patch of woodland which was very swampy, and had to be crossed on a roughly made log bridge. Immediately upon regaining the open country we entered the village of Misumba. We found that the factory of the Kasai Company lay between two portions of the village adjoining both, so we pitched our tents opposite to the agent's bungalow and accepted his offer of a room wherein to work, for we felt that we could not possibly be more in the village if we actually camped in the street. Almost as soon as we arrived two important

personages called upon us—Pongo-Pongo, recognised by Government as chief of Misumba, and Isambula N'Genga, viceroy of the Bangongo sub-tribe of the Bushongo (of which Misumba is the capital), under the great paramount chief of the nation who resides at the Mushenge or capital, five days' march to the west. It struck us as being a little remarkable that these two men should appear to be on such excellent terms with one another, and more remarkable still that the "chief," who wore around his neck the Government badge of authority (a white metal disc on a chain), should treat Isambula N'Genga with obvious deference, but the matter soon explained itself.

The ruler of the great Bushongo nation is Kwete Peshanga Kena, the Nyimi, or king, who resides at the Mushenge. To facilitate the government of his people he (or rather one of his ancestors) has appointed viceroys of the outlying sub-tribes, who possess practically unlimited powers and who pay tribute to the Nyimi. Isambula N'Genga is the viceroy and real ruler of the Bangongo sub-tribe. In order to save himself trouble the viceroy has appointed one of his elders (Pongo-Pongo) to act as his representative in dealing with the Belgian Government. When an officer went round the country to meet and officially "recognise" the local chiefs he met Pongo-Pongo, Isambula N'Genga keeping in the background. Pongo-Pongo represented himself as the chief, and received the official medallion, but in reality he is no more the chief of Misumba than any of the other dignitaries who are subordinate to the viceroy. He is merely a sort of minister for foreign affairs, and acts as a buffer between the chief and the State. Should the





MERIMBA.

Bangongo incur the displeasure of the Government, Pongo-Pongo would have to bear the brunt of it; should the representative of the State give him any presents, I believe that he hands them over to the viceroy. Pongo-Pongo, therefore, has a somewhat thankless task, for he would have absolutely no power to prevent Isambula N'Genga doing anything for which he himself would be punished.

This system of appointing some ordinary person to pose as chief before Government officials is very common in the Belgian Congo (as doubtless in other parts of Africa as well), and arises from the too hasty recognition of chiefs by officials who have had no opportunity of learning much about the peoples whose country they are supposed to administer. Pongo-Pongo was evidently told off by the viceroy to attend to our business during our stay at Misumba, and although we saw a good deal of the real chief and became very friendly with him, we owe most of the information we obtained to the readiness with which Pongo-Pongo answered the questions Torday put to him about his tribe. Isambula N'Genga was a real dandy. We nicknamed him "Beau Brummell." When sauntering about his village accompanied by one or two slaves he was the very personification of supercilious vanity. All the "elders" of Misumba carry, as a sort of wand of office, a walking-stick around which some creeper has left a special mark. These sticks add considerably to the grand air with which these gentlemen strut about the village. When used as walking-sticks they are held at arm's length in an attitude very suggestive of the English dandies of a century ago; at other

times they are carried across the shoulders, the hands hanging idly over the ends of the sticks. The sticks themselves are regarded with some respect, doubtless reflected from the grandeur of their owners, by the common people of the village, for if an elder leaves his wand across the doorway of a hut which he has entered no one dares to cross the threshold till the stick has been removed. Of all the dandies of Misumba, Isambula N'Genga was the most exquisite. He was always faultlessly "tukulaed," his hair evidently gave his wives infinite trouble every morning, he was scrupulously shaved, and his dress, a long loin-cloth of raphia fibre arranged carefully in many folds, was invariably clean and neat. He appeared almost too bored to live, and was much too indolent to be of any great service to Torday when he desired to obtain information about the Bushongo. At the same time Isambula N'Genga was as civil to us as he could summon up energy to be, and doubtless if he had not been friendly we should not have got on half so well with his people as we did.

We took an early opportunity of exploring the village of Misumba. Two points struck us as remarkable directly we entered the village streets—firstly, the fact that every one was busy; and secondly, the entire absence of any outward sign of the presence of the white man in the country. Usually upon arriving in an African village one finds that, although the women are busy enough working in the fields, pounding manioc into flour or looking after the children, the men are sleeping or idling away their time beneath the shade of the palms. At Misumba things





EMBROIDERING. THE RAPHA CLOTH.



are very different. In the midst of the long wide streets are situated many sheds under which work of all sorts is going on. In one of them the blacksmith—a much respected member of the community—may be seen at all hours busily engaged in the manufacture of the broad-bladed Bushongo knives, arrows, and spear-heads, iron bracelets, &c., while around him are clustered many bright-eyed smiling children, clothed in nature's garb, who love to catch the sparks that fly and eagerly await a turn at manipulating the primitive hand-bellows with which the small fire is fanned. Around the sides of the shed old men squat, gravely smoking green tobacco in their long curved pipes of neatly carved wood, talking over local politics with the smith, whose opinion is, apparently, worth taking on any subject.

Beneath the shade of other similar structures men are always engaged in the manufacture of cloth from the fibre of the raphia leaf, and continuous "thud-thud" of the hand-looms tells that work is in progress from early morning till dark. Basket-makers and men working at the manufacture of hunting nets are to be found in every patch of shade, while here and there a man is to be seen decorating wooden cups or boxes with those elaborate and really artistic carvings of which many specimens are now in the British Museum. So much for the men. The women, in addition to their ordinary agricultural and household duties, spend a good deal of time in embroidering with coloured patterns the raphia cloth woven by the men. This embroidery is of a very high order, some old pieces which we collected later being extraordinarily fine; they

are now to be seen in the British Museum. The children attend to the goats and chickens, the only live stock (with the exception of dogs) kept at Misumba. Any one who has travelled in Africa and has been struck with the indolence of the negro, would be considerably surprised were he to visit Misumba. Except the very aged, every one appeared to have something to do. We could not help feeling at the time of our visit what a pity it is that up to now no suitable industry has been introduced among a people so skilful with their hands as the Bushongo. I am sure that if once some useful and congenial manufacture were introduced at Misumba the people would show themselves to be remarkably clever workmen. It is difficult to suggest a suitable industry, but I should think that the manufacture of wooden articles would appeal to the native if tactfully introduced. The Bushongo are, however, extremely conservative, and would probably be slow to adopt any new enterprise. Their conservatism is manifested by their complete disregard of the ways of the white man and his "Baluba" employees, although the Kasai Company's factory is situated actually within their village (or rather was so situated in 1908, but I believe there was some talk of its removal to the banks of the Lubudi River about six miles to the west).

Among the Batetela people of the Lubefu, as I have shown, European cotton-stuff has practically taken the place of the old-time raphia cloth, and plaster buildings are fast replacing the original native huts; among the eastern Bushongo, however, no such change is taking

place. One very rarely sees trade cloth worn at Misumba, the people preferring to manufacture their own material, which is much more durable and very little rougher in texture. All the dwellings in the village consist of the picturesque Bushongo huts which add so much to the neatness and beauty of the place. They are rectangular buildings about ten feet by nine feet in size, made of sticks cut from the stem of the palm leaf, and upon their walls neat patterns are interwoven in black fibre representing some form of what is known as the "lozenge" pattern. They are usually very neat and in good repair. Upon several occasions when shooting at some distance from Misumba I have slept in these huts, and I found them completely weatherproof even during the heavy storms of the rainy season. Before sleeping in one of them it is necessary to be sure that the owner has not prepared for your arrival by brushing out the hut, for, should he have done so, he will probably have disturbed a number of inhabitants, other than human, who may cause you to regret having left your tent behind; but it is only fair to say that the Bushongo are a very cleanly race on the whole. The houses are as similar to one another in their internal arrangement as in their outward appearance. The doors are very small, and the bed, consisting of a mat laid over a rough frame of logs, is always situated on the left-hand side of the entrance as you go in. A fire of logs usually occupies the middle of the house, and a large square box, acting as a larder, is suspended in one corner to keep the food supply out of the reach of rats and mice.

Sticks are thrust into the walls from which to suspend baskets, cooking pots, and other utensils, while the corners are filled with hunting nets, bows and arrows, and spears. Most of the huts have some small charm such as a little curved figure stuck in the wall under the eaves outside the door. The huts are laid out in fine straight streets, about thirty yards wide; and built as it is upon the edge of a wood and containing a fair number of palm trees, Misumba must rank as one of the neatest and prettiest villages we visited. We were soon hard at work among the natives. One of the first things that Torday did was to examine the Batwa, who hunt for the chief of Misumba. These people, although smaller than the stalwart Bushongo, are considerably larger than those we had seen at Lusambo, and they appear to have largely adopted the manners and customs of the Bushongo. I went out with them upon several occasions in the hopes of obtaining a shot at some buffalo which used to feed in the plains between Misumba and Zappo-Lubumba, but I did not get a chance of testing their nerve when tackling dangerous game, for we were unable to come up with the beasts; from what I saw of their tracking, however, I consider them the inferiors of many natives I have hunted with, and I have no doubt that they cannot compare with the Batwa of the great forest in the matter of stalking and shooting game. Torday was at great pains to obtain a vocabulary from these people, and one of the men he interrogated caused us some amusement. He had been requested to answer clearly the words that Torday put to him (using as a

medium the Chituba language), and so he sat opposite to him on the other side of a small camp table and roared out his replies at the top of a remarkably powerful voice. Frequently he would pause and exchange pleasantries with a number of natives who were present, and this caused such an interruption of work that we were obliged to drive the spectators away by threatening them with the contents of a glass of water. The prospect of having the water thrown over them caused them to run out into the pouring rain (a real tornado) to avoid it! The vocabulary proceeded well until we came to the numerals. Here a real difficulty arose. Our informant was no mathematician. He insisted upon counting 1, 2, 5, 3, 8, 10, 7, &c. &c., and we could not induce him to count consecutively; I firmly believe that he was quite unable to do so. It is, as a matter of fact, by no means so uncommon to find the primitive negro unable to count beyond the number "five," up to which numeral his fingers and thumb act as a guide to his calculations.

Although the Batwa are the real hunters of Misumba, the Bushongo themselves very frequently indulge in a little sport (if so their hunting can be termed), for Pongo-Pongo possesses two muzzle-loaders, and dearly loves an opportunity of displaying them. I accompanied him upon one of his shooting excursions near the village. The day was very hot, and a start was not made until nearly noon. This should have shown me that I was not likely to get many shots myself, as, of course, all game would long since have sought the shade of the dense woodlands, in which one's

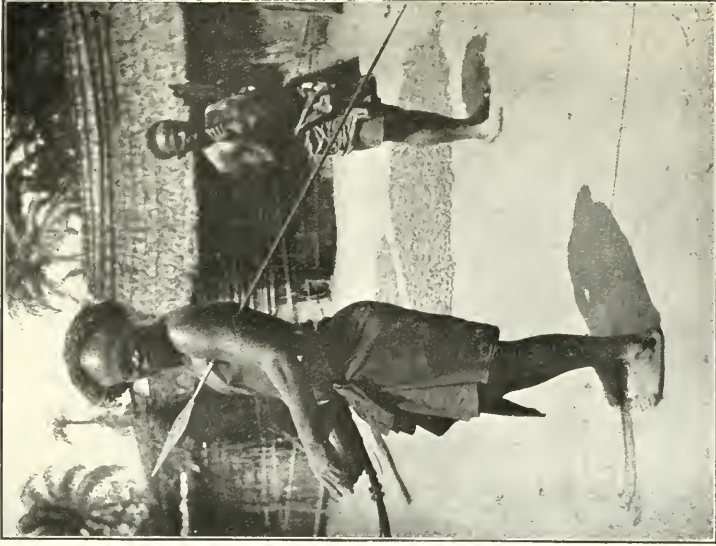
chance of bagging it with the rifle is very small ; but I was anxious to watch the Batwa and Bushongo hunting in their own way, so I was glad of the opportunity of accompanying them. We left the village amid considerable noise, several members of the party performing a sort of "A-hunting we will go" upon horns made from the points of young elephant tusks, and others giving vent to the Bushongo war-cry, a sound suggestive of both a "view holloa" and the neighing of a horse. We numbered about fifty altogether (including some sportsmen of very tender years), and were accompanied by some twenty of the tan-and-white prick-eared dogs which are to be found in every Congo village. Pongo-Pongo carried one of his muzzle-loaders, while the second one was entrusted to a slave who walked behind him. The rest of the party were armed only with bows and arrows and spears, while several of them carried the long nets into which the game was to be driven. About three-quarters of an hour's walk brought us to the side of the wood in which we were to commence operations. Here a consultation was held as to the arrangements for the "beat." This was conducted with all possible noise, and should have been sufficient to warn any animal within a radius of a mile or two that something very desperate in the way of hunting parties was about to be held. One man who, as we subsequently discovered, held an official position as chief hunter in the village, at last succeeded in shouting down the others and obtaining a hearing, whereupon he delivered a lengthy speech at the top of his voice, evidently pointing out to the various people the parts they were to take in the afternoon's work. His remarks were received with universal hand-clapping. The

men who had charge of the nets then departed into the wood. The nets are very long and only about three feet high. They are placed in a line, and the game is driven towards them, so that, when entangled in their meshes, it may be speared or shot by men concealed behind them. Pongo-Pongo now loaded his guns. His bullet-box was a real curio. It contained scraps of metal of all kinds, and of all sizes and shapes, none of which, of course, properly fitted the bore of his guns, so that any accuracy of shooting was entirely out of the question; all the same, I would rather be hit and mercifully despatched by any expanding bullet from a modern rifle than receive in my person a few of those jagged lumps of copper with which Pongo-Pongo (after much careful examination of his stock of projectiles) proceeded to charge his guns. While he was so engaged, the owners of the dogs were busy tying rattles round these animals. Each dog had a spherical rattle hollowed from a solid piece of wood strapped tightly round its loins, their object being to make a noise as the line of dogs and beaters advances, and so frighten the game into the nets, for the dogs themselves do not as a rule give tongue unless they actually get a view of their quarry. Everything being at last ready, we moved off into the wood. I noticed carefully what Pongo-Pongo's movements would be, and upon finding that he intended accompanying the beaters, I suggested taking up a stand near the nets, for I knew that my life would not be worth a moment's purchase if I happened to be within range of my host or his slave when they happened to see a pig, and I had no desire to perish of copper poisoning as a result of a shot in the leg from his gun. I was

accordingly conducted to a position near the line of nets to await the arrival of game as it retired before the advancing line of dogs and men. For some time everything was still. At length a little movement among the countless inhabitants of the forest trees showed that the birds had become aware that something unusual was going on, and a few minutes later a hornbill and some plantain-eaters hurriedly left their perches and departed farther into the wood, the latter emitting that deep rolling cry which is one of the most beautiful of all the sounds that break the stillness of the African forest. A little later a crashing of branches in the tree-tops, growing rapidly nearer, indicated the approach of a troop of monkeys, and I had an opportunity of bagging specimens of both a coal-black colobus and a cercopithecus monkey; an opportunity which, to the disgust of my Bushongo companions, I did not embrace, as I was not desirous of turning back with the noise of a shot any more important beast which might be approaching. Soon the beaters could be heard drawing nearer and nearer, and the rattles of the dogs could be distinguished as these animals darted hither and thither in the dense undergrowth, occasionally (though very rarely) giving vent to a short, sharp yelp. Suddenly some shouting in the distance caused my companions to quiver with excitement as they told me that a pig (a red river hog) had been seen by the beaters, and directed me to keep a keen look-out for the animal, which, if all had gone well, might be expected to come in our direction. Unfortunately, however, all had not gone well. The line of beaters converged upon the nets, driving nothing before them at all, for two pigs (the only animals seen) had broken







A BUSHONGO OF MISUMBA.



THE HUNTING FETISH, MISUMBA.

back through the line without so much as an arrow in their hides. I have no doubt that the noisy discussion at the woodside before commencing the beat had driven all the small antelopes which inhabit the forest far away into the depths of the wood, and pigs are notoriously alert and difficult to surprise. Pongo-Pongo, upon rejoining me, suggested a return home, and we reached Misumba at dusk, very hot, very scratched, and very thirsty, without bringing with us a single trophy. This by no means infrequently occurs.

The Bushongo are a most interesting people; I believe Torday's work among them has shown them to be quite one of the most interesting tribes of Central Africa; they are easy to get on with, and in every way desirable; but I am afraid their dearest friend could not truthfully make out for them any claim whatever to be considered sportsmen. They are quite the worst hunters we met during our journey in the Kasai. Occasionally large animals are killed by them, but usually this is done by means of traps. The elephant which I have already mentioned as having been killed near Misumba was trapped by means of a large harpoon, heavily weighted with a log, falling upon the nape of his neck from a tree-top, a very common means of killing elephant and hippopotami. When a large animal is bagged, a sacrifice is always made to the hunting fetish in Misumba. We were present at that which took place after the death of the elephant alluded to above. The fetish, which is supposed to influence the fortunes of the chase, consists of a wooden image of a man (nearly all head, the body being of microscopic proportions and covered with cloth). It is very

poorly carved in comparison with the beautifully worked cups and boxes for which the Bushongo are famous, and in place of the usual tukula dye, its face is stained with soot. At the ceremony which I am about to describe, it was placed in the village street, and was surrounded by a large crowd, including several drummers, who contributed to the sacrifice quite their fair share of the uproar without which no negro festival is complete. In front of the image the fetish-man—quite a young man, by the way—executed a *pas seul*, advancing to the pedestal on which the fetish stood and then retiring backwards to the edge of the crowd. His dance at an end (and he displayed considerable endurance before he ceased his antics), the fetish-man solemnly poured water into the ear of the figure, while another man, with equal solemnity, blew some tobacco smoke in its face from his long wooden pipe. An unfortunate (and very skinny) chicken was then produced, and its throat was cut, the poor bird being allowed to die slowly on the ground before the image, while the fetish-man continued his dance and the drummers furiously beat their tom-toms. The sacrifice was then at an end. Very often similar ceremonies precede a day's hunting, and these are sometimes held beneath a sacred tree in the grounds of the Kasai Company's factory. The social organisation of Misumba is almost exactly identical with that of the court of the great Bushongo king at the Mushenge, although, of course, Isambula N'Genga being only a viceroy, it is on a smaller scale. We enjoyed ample opportunities for gaining insight into the intricate organisation of this miniature court owing to the friendliness of the chief and Pongo-Pongo; indeed, so friendly did they

become that they suggested to Torday that he should be formally made an "elder" of Misumba, a suggestion which, after due consideration, he tactfully declined.

He felt that when we visited the king (which, after what we had seen of the eastern Bushongo, we were now firmly determined to do) it might not add much to his dignity if he had become an elder at the court of a viceroy; and as there appeared to be nothing to be gained by going through the ceremony, all particulars of which we had already learned, he contrived to put off the question indefinitely until the idea had left the minds of the people of Misumba. I will not give my reader any detailed account of the composition of Isambula N'Genga's court, as I shall describe more fully the organisation of the great court at the Mushenge. There is one dignitary, however, who must be mentioned here, the old Bilumbu, or "instructor of the young." We became friendly with him under circumstances worthy of a boy's book of adventure. He was ill, very ill, with an attack of fever which he could not shake off, and the continued strain of which seemed likely to wear him out, for he was very old indeed. Having tried various native remedies without success, he at last decided to ask the white man for medicine. He appealed to Torday. Now, Torday is a very fair doctor, and upon this occasion he surpassed himself in his treatment of the case. In a few days the old man had recovered. The administration of quinine tabloids was attended with no small amount of ceremony. Torday, of course, had impressed upon the Bilumbu the almost magic power of Messrs. Burroughs & Wellcome's drugs, and the old man came to regard them with a good

deal of superstitious awe, so that he would never allow any one to see him actually swallow the tabloids. When we arrived with his dose he used to insist upon being completely covered up in a blanket, from the folds of which he would extend one bony hand, into which the pills were placed; he then swallowed the drugs, concealed from view by the blanket. He made such a mystery over the taking of the pills that we had the greatest difficulty in preventing ourselves from laughing, but, of course, any unseemly levity on our part would have materially hindered the cure. In return for Torday's medical attendance the old man imparted to him many of the strange legends of the Bushongo, which, as "instructor of the young," it was his duty to teach to the rising generation. Day after day Torday would go down to the Bilumbu's hut, and seated in the shade in some secluded spot he would listen by the hour to the old man's tales, and, as a result, he was able to gain an extensive knowledge of Bushongo folk-lore. These legends are preserved only in the brain of the Bilumbu, for, of course, the art of writing is quite unknown to the Bushongo, and they are sacred; it was therefore entirely due to Torday's good fortune in being able to cure the old man of his fever that he obtained this splendid opportunity of learning the stories from the man who knew them best. The old Bilumbu evidently considered that the dignity of his office required that he should surround himself with as much mystery as possible—hence no doubt his habit of taking pills under a blanket; and accordingly the relating of his legends was not without its ceremony, in the course of which the old fellow generally succeeded in making





THE BILUMBU TAKING PILLS UNDER A BLANKET.



THE BILUMBU DISMISSING AN INQUISITIVE CHILD.



something out of somebody. This is the sort of thing that used to occur. We would go and call upon the Bilumbu, accompanied by a youth of the name of Masolo (a great friend of ours who usually accompanied us wherever we went, and who had temporarily attached himself to the expedition in the capacity of guide to Misumba, interpreter, extra boy, and gun-bearer). Masolo spoke Chituba well, and as the old "instructor of the young" spoke no language but his own, the lad used to act as interpreter between us. The Bilumbu, with as mysterious an air as possible, would conduct us to a yard between two huts, or to some other quiet place, and then seat himself on the ground. For a few minutes he would say nothing, or merely make conversation upon general subjects. Then he would think of some particular legend which he wished to impart to us, and he would turn furiously upon the crowd of youths and children, who always tried to be present at these interviews, and drive them away with a flow of language ill befitting an instructor of the young. Every one but Masolo having departed, he would turn to our youthful interpreter and inquire what he meant by remaining (he always did this, although he knew perfectly well that the lad was going to act as interpreter). Masolo would then explain that his presence was a necessity, and the old man would say, "The things that I am about to relate are too strong for the ears of children, but if you must hear them give me your knife." Masolo would then always hand over his knife, or whatever object the Bilumbu asked for, without demur, and the old man, having secured something for himself, would then proceed to relate his story. This occurred practically every

time we visited him, and as, of course, we had to return to Masolo the value of the things thus extorted from him, the process of studying folk-lore became rather expensive. The old man had, no doubt, many similar ways of increasing his income, for an incident occurred during our stay at Misumba which clearly demonstrated his readiness to turn anything to account. There was a violent tornado one night, in the course of which the lightning struck a tree quite close to the old Bilumbu's hut. Now this would have terrified nine natives out of ten, and led them to procure for themselves a number of charms against lightning, but the "instructor of the young" realised at once that there was money in the occurrence. He concealed his fears (if he had any), and at once proclaimed to his neighbours how fortunate it was for them that such a person as himself resided in their midst who could thus induce the lightning to expend its wrath upon a tree instead of destroying life in the village. He was then good enough to accept a few tokens of gratitude from those whose lives he had saved by his magic control of the storm. Truly the old fellow was a shrewd business man! The tales themselves which we gleaned from our aged friend were many of them of a nature only to be printed in a strictly scientific work, and even then some of them would benefit by translation into Latin; others, however, were merely stories indicating the origin of quite harmless proverbs. To give my reader some idea of Bushongo folk-tales, I will narrate one story as told to us by the Bilumbu; it has reference to the "yuka," the animal whose weird cry had attracted our attention at Batempa, and of which we had secured two living specimens.

Once upon a time a man met a personal enemy in the road between two villages, to neither of which he nor his enemy belonged. He took the opportunity of administering a good thrashing to the man who had incurred his anger. The screams of his victim were so loud as to be heard in both villages, and the warriors of each turned out equipped for war. Arriving upon the scene, they found the thrashing in progress, and immediately took sides in the affair, with the result that a general *mêlée* ensued, in the course of which several people were killed. After the battle it occurred to the warriors to wonder what they had been fighting about, and they discovered that all the bloodshed had been caused by a quarrel between two men, in whom none of them had the slightest interest. So it is when a man has climbed a palm tree to obtain "malafu" (palm wine), he hears the cry of the yuka, and, mistaking it for the shriek of a human being in distress, he hurriedly climbs down to go to the rescue. In his descent he slips and breaks his leg. Nowadays when a young man shows his intention of doing anything without due consideration or of meddling in other people's affairs, the other men will say to him, "Remember the yuka's cry," and he will then perhaps reconsider his plans. I have told this tale exactly as told to us, and it appears to point a similar moral to our proverb, "Look before you leap." Bushongo folk-lore is full of such stories, but some of them are even more far-fetched than this one, and some are practically unintelligible.

On the whole our life at Misumba was very quiet. We were busy at our work from morning until night, and the place was too peaceful for any particularly exciting incident

to be likely to occur. At Misumba, too, we heard none of those rumours of wars which are ever in the atmosphere of the Congo, and which, true or untrue, dogged our footsteps almost wherever we went. When one is in hourly contact with interesting and hitherto unspoilt natives amusing things are continually brought to one's notice, and one of the quaintest divorce cases I have ever heard of came to our ears at Misumba. A resident in the village whose name I have forgotten, but whom we will term "A," accused a bachelor, also a native of Misumba, whom we may call "B," of undue familiarity with his wife. B emphatically denied the accusation, and brought a charge of slander against A. The case was taken before the chief, and pending his decision, B proceeded to steal a chicken belonging to the chief. He openly confessed to having done so, and told the chief that he must repay himself for the loss of his bird by purloining something belonging to the slanderer, A! The case was altogether too complicated for the chief, who invited Torday to give an opinion upon it. The parties were therefore brought to us one morning, B appearing armed with a spear. It is most unorthodox to carry arms at meetings of this kind, so Torday inquired why he had come to a palaver with a weapon in his hand. "Oh, it's all right," replied the fellow; "I am not going to hurt you." He, however, laid aside the spear. We then went on to examine the facts of the case, and finally inquired of B why he should steal one of the chief's chickens when he felt himself aggrieved at A's accusations. His answer was rather unexpected: "I knew I should never get justice from the chief unless he was personally concerned in the matter,

so I took his chicken to draw him into it. Now he can get it out of A!" This truly remarkable way of currying favour with his judge was not entirely successful, for he was at once found guilty of an intrigue with A's wife, and sentenced to pay a large fine in cowrie shells (the small change of the district) to the chief, as well as damages to the petitioner, and was removed in custody until he could hand over the amount required. A few days later we met him, at liberty and quite cheerful, having paid his fine and having married the lady who had been at the bottom of the trouble. Had the petitioner stolen the chicken I think it is very unlikely that the decree would have been granted, for justice among the African natives is by no means untempered with corruption.

As time went on we amassed a very extensive collection of articles for the ethnographical department of the British Museum, of which specimens of wood-carving constituted a great proportion. The Bakuba decorate with elaborate carvings even the simplest of wooden household utensils; the bellows used by the blacksmith are carved, the long tobacco-pipes, the mugs from which palm wine is drunk, the boxes (all hewn out of solid blocks of wood, for the Bushongo do not yet *join* wood together) in which the red tukula dye is kept are all ornamented with raised patterns, and many of them show a high degree of artistic talent. These carvings have received unstinted praise from several prominent anthropologists since our return from the Congo, for very little had previously been known about them. People very often imagine that such things are picked up for next to nothing in Africa, and, of course, sometimes

this is true, but among the Bushongo it is by no means the case. The native of Misumba is a very good hand at a bargain, and is also by no means so anxious to sell his possessions as are the Batetela. We came across an instance of Bushongo business dealing which rivals, if it does not excel, the greed of the old Bilumbu alluded to above. We met one day the deformed boy who had charge of the chickens belonging to the Kasai Company's factory going towards the village with a bundle of native cloth under his arm. We casually inquired what he was going to buy with so much money, and he informed us that he was not going to make any purchases at all, but was about to lend the cloth to a friend who had got into debt. Torday thought at the time that this generosity sounded a little too good to be strictly true, so he made a few inquiries into the case, and discovered that the boy was going to lend the cloth to a man for a couple of months at a rate of interest of 200 per cent.; at the expiration of the two months, if the full amount was not paid back, the debtor would become the slave of the chicken-keeper! It may well be imagined therefore that in bargaining for curios with a people who are as grasping as this we had to dip into our pockets rather more deeply than we cared about.

All the Bushongo are extremely fond of dancing; the great chief at the Mushenge, as we subsequently discovered, dearly loves a dance, and is only too glad of any excuse to organise one, while at Misumba dances on a large scale are very frequently held. One portion of the village will often invite the inhabitants of the other to come over in the afternoon for a dance to be held in the wide street, and





A CEREMONIAL DANCE BY AN ELDER.



A DANCE AT MISUMBA.



upon such occasions the people turn out *en masse* bent upon enjoyment. The band (that is to say, a number of the ubiquitous tom-toms), performs in the midst of the street, while the people, attired in their best loin-cloths and carefully tukulaed, dance around it in single file, the dresses of the women, some spotlessly white and some red, gleaming in the sun as the wearers move stiffly in a by no means graceful variety of *danse du ventre*. We have seen as many as three hundred women taking part in one of these dances, varying in age from tiny girls to matrons whose dancing days, one would have thought, had long since passed away. They were arranged in the line according to the colour of their dresses—a batch of red, then some wearing white, then more red, and so on. As not infrequently occurs among peoples more advanced in civilisation than the Bushongo, a great many of the young men of Misumba are far too *blasé* to take any part in the proceedings other than honouring them with their presence and lounging in the shade of the huts as they cast critical glances at the ladies. A few, however, do dance, and these are usually very smartly attired in loin-cloths bordered with innumerable tassels and brightly coloured feathers in their hair. The viceroy is always present at the large dances, sitting beneath a shed surrounded by his elders.

During our stay at Misumba both Torday and I found time to make excursions into the surrounding country. Torday undertook a journey of some days' duration to the country of the Bangendi, sub-tribe of the Bushongo, who live on the western side of the Lubudi River, while I on several occasions went out to neighbouring villages in search of

sport, staying away from one to four nights at a time. During my wanderings to the east of Misumba I came across several of the quarry-like crevices, such as I have described on the way from the Sankuru, and we found out that formerly the Bushongo used to extract a good deal of iron from them, but nowadays the metal used in the manufacture of knives, arrow-heads, &c., is nearly all obtained from the Kasai Company. Game is by no means abundant near Misumba. I have seen a few small duikers and a bush-buck, and I have come across the tracks of small herds of buffalo, though I was never able to get a glimpse of these latter animals. To judge by the size of their tracks they are probably members of the same species of dwarf buffalo as those which I shot later near the Mushenge, namely *Bos caffer manus*. The herds are small, containing as a rule from three to half-a-dozen animals. A kind of sitatunga antelope is said to exist in the swamps near the Lubudi, but of this beast I never saw so much as a track. With the addition of an occasional leopard and some elephants (the latter, I think, merely pass through the district and are not permanently resident there), the above beasts constitute the game list of Misumba.

The patches of woodland which are to be found in all the hollows of the undulating grass land abound with monkeys, and a number of interesting small mammals can be collected in the neighbourhood, of which we were lucky enough to discover a new species of *petrodomus*, which has been named after Torday. The tsetse-fly does not exist in the plains around Misumba, but as this insect is so very local I am not prepared to say that it is not to be found in the

swampy woodlands of the district. On the whole Misumba is fairly healthy, but the climate is considerably hotter than that of Mokunji; with the exception of one very mild attack of fever, which laid me up for a few hours, none of us suffered from malaria.

In the middle of April the time arrived for Hardy to return to Europe, so Torday decided to interrupt his work among the Bushongo, and, after seeing Hardy off to the coast, to visit the primitive Batetela tribes which inhabit the great forest to the north of the Sankuru before going on to the capital of the Bushongo king. Had we proceeded from Misumba direct to the court of the king, which lies to the west near the confluence of the Kasai and the Sankuru, we should have had to undertake a long journey in order to reach the forest peoples, so it seemed wiser to visit them at once and to postpone for a few months the completion of our work among the Bushongo.

But we discovered that it was one thing to decide to leave Misumba and quite a different matter to procure carriers to transport our loads across the river. Cloth is the currency of the district, and, as I have shown, very large quantities of cloth is woven at Misumba. It is not surprising, therefore, that when a man wants "money" he should prefer to manufacture it quietly at his own loom in the village instead of undertaking some irksome work such as load-carrying in order to earn it. We found that no one was in the least desirous of carrying our baggage to the Sankuru. In our difficulty the ethnographical information which Torday had obtained demonstrated its practical value. We had heard from some of our Bushongo friends of a power-

ful secret society which existed to maintain the authority and dignity of the chief in case of any attempt to dispute his rights. Nearly all the men in the village belonged to this society, and Torday, who had learned all about its organisation, knew that if he could persuade its "grand master" to use his influence on our behalf we should most probably be able to get as many porters as we wanted. The evening before we wished to depart he accordingly visited this dignitary, and returned having left him a good sum in trade goods, but having received a promise of assistance. Next morning a couple of hundred men turned up at day-break to carry our loads! The study of native manners and customs can certainly be of practical service to the traveller.

## CHAPTER IV

### WITH THE BANKUTU CANNIBALS

ALTHOUGH we had been able to obtain porters for our journey with the help of the head of the secret society, the march to the Sankuru was not without its difficulties. It was full of the little annoyances inseparable from travel in out-of-the-way places. To begin with, the day was intensely hot, and the hours of marching through the plains proved rather trying; in addition to fatigue we were soon inconvenienced by thirst, for the porter who was carrying our reserve of water had placed it in a large bottle which contained some dirty oil, thereby rendering it quite undrinkable, a fact which we did not discover in time to husband the small supply we were able to carry in our own water-bottles. Then on arriving at the village of Zappo-Lubumba, where we camped for the night, there arose a good deal of disputing between our Bushongo porters and the Basongo-Meno of the village, for the latter flatly declined to sell our men any food or to show them where clear drinking water could be obtained. This led to our having rather a stormy interview with Zappo. We told him that we knew perfectly well there was plenty of food in the place, and that we were ready to pay a good price for it; he replied that he had told his people to trade with ours, but they had refused to do

so, and he suggested that we should take the food by force. This, of course, we could not do, for we should at once have ruined our reputation as peaceful travellers and should very likely have got the worst of a "brush-up" with the warlike Basongo-Meno, so we had to be content with Zappo's promise that he would do his best to arrange matters. Meantime we told our Bushongo to be careful to avoid any breach of the peace. Shortly after we had turned in, Jones aroused us with the pleasing intelligence that every one of our porters had bolted, leaving us without a single man to convey our loads the remaining few miles to the river, entirely dependent upon the goodwill of the Basongo-Meno, whose attitude towards us was anything but friendly. Nothing was to be gained by making a fuss in the middle of the night, so we slept on till morning, and then once more had a stormy interview with Zappo. We put the matter straight to him. His people had treated our porters so badly that they had been obliged to run away, and therefore the people of Zappo-Lubumba had practically prevented our passage through their country; this amounted to an act of hostility which would arouse the ire of the Government; the garrison of Bena Dibele was not far off, and the soldiers there could easily come to our assistance; we did not want to get any one into trouble, but we must proceed at once to the river; what was Zappo prepared to do? Now Zappo himself had never been in the least unfriendly to us, and I am sure he genuinely regretted the turn affairs had taken, for he at once promised to do his best, and then explained to us the difficulty of his own position. As at Misumba so at Lubumba, the

real chief and the chief recognised by the Government were two different individuals. Zappo was merely an elder who, like Pongo-Pongo, posed as chief before any white man who might pass through the village, and possessed no authority over the people whatsoever. He told us that his position was an impossible one, and begged of us to set matters right if we met any Government official, for he was sick of always risking trouble to himself which might at any moment be brought about by an act of violence on the part of people over whom he had no control. We told him that he had our fullest sympathy, but that the matter that really concerned us was how our loads were to get to the river; when they had been safely carried there we might think more about Zappo's troubles than we had time to do at the moment. Zappo then left us, and after a good deal of talking he induced the people of the village to carry our baggage on to Gandu, or rather to a point on the river a little above the fuel-station, whence it was conveyed to its destination in canoes. With the exception of two straps nothing whatever was stolen, so we considered that we had come well out of a situation which might have ended in unpleasantness. The village of Zappo-Lubumba is too easily reached from the Government post of Bena Dibele for us to have anticipated any actual attack upon our persons, but the attitude of the Basongo-Meno clearly showed that only the proximity of troops prevented them from plundering us and incidentally cutting our throats. We knew that we might have to wait several days at Gandu for the arrival of the Kasai Company's steamer, which was to carry Hardy down-stream to Dima on his way

to the coast, so we settled down to make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. The first thing we did was to rig up a large "dining-room" of mosquito netting, for our previous visit to the fuel-station had shown us that some such protection was absolutely necessary. I have never stayed in a place where mosquitoes are so numerous or so aggressive as at Gandu. To sit out of doors after sundown would have been quite impossible. Our tents were pitched close up to the edge of the river bank, which in the rainy season is about twelve feet high above the water's edge, and in the mornings the inside of the ends of the tents which faced the water were simply covered with swarms of mosquitoes, to avoid disturbing which it was necessary to dress with caution. We used literally to run from the shelter of our big net to our tents when we went to bed, and then used to turn in without lighting a candle for fear that a light might attract still more of the fever-spreading insects, which must breed in countless millions in the forest swamps which lie close to the fuel-station. So bad are the mosquitoes at Gandu that natives staying for a night there who are unprovided with cotton shelters under which to sleep, often prefer to find some comparatively dry spot in the forest and lie down out of doors at the risk of being killed by leopards to being eaten alive by the mosquitoes in the wood-cutters' huts by the river. Gandu, therefore, is by no means pleasant by night, and by day it is scarcely more desirable, for the tsetse-fly, the bearer of the deadly sleeping sickness, is very prevalent, and one can hardly avoid being frequently bitten by it if one does not take advantage of the protection of mosquito nets.





A BASONGO-MENO WARRIOR.



OUR CAMP AT GANDU.



Our net was a large rectangular one, under which several people could dine, so we spent most of our time beneath it, but the heat at Gandu is usually very great, and at midday in our mosquito-proof shelter it was well-nigh unbearable. Our stay at the fuel-station was not a particularly pleasant one; but although we had no work to prevent us from brooding over our discomforts, our time was fully occupied in providing fresh meat for the table, the people of Zappo-Lubumba having declined to sell us any poultry. We depended entirely upon our guns for our food. The fuel-station lies in a little clearing about sixty yards square on the left or south bank of the river, and is surrounded by very dense forest, in which, as I have said, are a number of swamps. The river is here about half a mile wide, and in mid-stream there lies an island, half of which is covered with impenetrable forest for the most part under water, while the other half consists of a sandbank. Immediately upon our arrival we inquired of the wood-choppers if any wild-duck frequented this island, and we were rather unpleasantly surprised to learn that they were only to be found there at rare intervals although a few could daily be seen flying up and down the river. We therefore decided to place a wooden decoy-duck which we had brought with us at the end of the sandbank in the hope of attracting the birds to the island. We found only one canoe at Gandu, and that was a small one which leaked badly, while the only wood-chopper who showed any desire to help us in our shooting was quite the worst paddler and least intelligent native I have ever had the misfortune to meet. He contrived to make the canoe roll about to

an incredible extent whenever one wanted to attempt a long shot with a rifle at a crane or some similar wader, and used to give us advice at the top of his voice just as we were endeavouring to approach within shot of a particularly wary bird. We found our decoy-duck a very useful asset. With its aid we managed to attract quite a number of wild-duck to the island, and we soon came to the conclusion that the fact that one's food supply depends upon one's shooting considerably increases one's percentage of kills. But we were not able to secure duck every day. Often we had to be content with cranes. The meat from the breasts of these birds is really not bad, and "crane steaks" became quite a favourite dish with us. Neither Torday nor I are great anglers, but Luchima, our Batetela cook, used occasionally to catch some fish, though he complained bitterly of my tackle, saying that he would much prefer a primitive native hook to those which had been supplied by a well-known London shop. His method of fishing was to tie his line to a stout stick and attempt to jerk the fish on to the bank directly he felt a "bite"; another way of catching the larger varieties of fish is to fix the end of the line (a stout one) to a strong but pliable sapling growing at the water's edge; the hook is then thrown out into the stream baited with the entrails of a bird. When the fish takes the hook the bendable tree gives sufficiently to his pull to prevent the line being broken by the jerk, and in this way one man can look after several lines.

There is no lack of animal and bird life at Gandu. Elephants are said to visit the Sankuru at this point

during the dry season, when the swamps inland are practically dried up, and hippopotami are to be found at no great distance from the wood post. Curiously enough we did not see a single crocodile in the neighbourhood, although the word "Gandu" means crocodile in the Chituba trade-language. Pigs are very frequently to be heard by night splashing through the swamps close to the fuel-stations, but owing to the density of the forest it is almost impossible to approach these animals; leopards exist in the forest, but are not very numerous. Upon the island opposite to our camp we saw a number of tracks of the sitatunga antelope, but we never succeeded in getting a shot at this somewhat rare beast. The natives assured us that the animals were in the habit of swimming over from the right bank of the river to the island, where it is possible that they may have found a certain herb with a salt taste, in search of which I have known buffaloes to swim the Sankuru. Monkeys of several varieties are, of course, very plentiful in the woods, and we used to shoot specimens of them, both for the sake of collecting their skins and in order to supply our boys with their meat, of which most natives are very fond; but Gandu is richer in birds than in beasts. Most of the varieties of aquatic birds that frequent the Sankuru are to be seen in a day at Gandu. Cranes, storks, herons, marabouts, egrets, spur-winged plovers, duck, moor-fowl, ibis, and brilliantly coloured kingfishers are only a few of the many species that are to be found on the island or along the river banks, while the woods are swarming with countless feathered inhabitants. We therefore spent our time, when not actually shooting

for the pot, in preparing the skins of birds to be sent home. After a few days' stay at Gandu our old friend the *Velde* appeared on her way down-stream, and Hardy left us to begin his journey home. He had seen a good deal of native life, and took with him a great number of sketches and notes of people and scenery to be worked up into finished pictures in Europe. He much regretted, I think, that circumstances would not permit him to stay on and undertake with us a journey in the equatorial forest; but he had not been in particularly good health, and, on the whole, perhaps it is a good thing for him that he was unable to remain and have to endure the effects of bad climate and shortage of food which we were to go through before the end of the year. Several days elapsed before a steamer going up-river arrived to take Torday and me to Bena Dibebe. During these days we managed to induce one or two Basongo-Meno fishermen to visit our camp, and even to take us out shooting in their canoes. Zappo himself came several times to see us, and upon one occasion took us out to shoot a hippopotamus. His paddling was of a very different kind to that of the Baluba wood-chopper who usually acted as our ferryman. Zappo was absolutely at home in his canoe. The craft was a small one, and when Torday and I both accompanied Zappo her gunwale was very little above the water; but with such a paddler we had no fear of a ducking. In common with all the natives of the Sankuru, Zappo propelled his canoe in a standing position, keeping her level with the pressure of his feet. As he approached the hippo he kept his boat absolutely steady, sending her forward swiftly yet so

smoothly that one could scarcely distinguish the strokes of the paddle that moved her. In addition to this Zappo was as cool as one could possibly wish, and one was never worried with the thought that he would spoil one's chances by talking or moving just as one was about to take a shot. I have never been out shooting with a better paddler than Zappo. Fortunately we were able to reward him, for we killed a hippo about two miles above our camp; but as we shot the animal in the evening we were unable to find it when it rose to the surface of the water, and the steamer arriving next morning to take us up the river, we saw no more of the beast, which, we subsequently learned, was found later in the day by the Basongo-Meno.

The voyage to Bena Dibele passed off without any incident, and we reached the Government post on the right bank of the Sankuru in the afternoon of the third day after our start from Gandu. The place is built in a clearing in the forest on the bank of the river, and is a typical example of a Congolese military station. It was under the command of a *sous-officier* of a Belgian cavalry regiment, who had already served for several years in the Congo, assisted by a young civilian. The *chef de poste* had about forty native soldiers and a similar number of workmen, who cut up and packed the rubber brought in by the local natives in payment of taxes; he was in charge of a large district along the shores of the Sankuru, which extended some distance to the north and south of the river. The civilian's duties consisted largely in managing the transport of stores and rubber to and from the five other Government posts which lie to the north in the

great forest, in the *domaine privée* of the King of the Belgians.

The buildings at Bena Dibele consisted of the bungalows of the *chef de poste* and his assistant, two spare bungalows for officials staying at the post on their way to stations in the forest, two large rubber-drying houses, a store-house for trade goods, a guard-room, and villages for the soldiers and the workmen. The place was, like nearly all Congolese stations, very neatly kept, and lying on the shores of a fine open reach of the Sankuru it is quite picturesque. Its importance arises from the fact that it is the base whence supplies are sent into the southern part of the *domaine privée*. The Lukenye River flows parallel with the Sankuru about five days' march to the north, and upon this river are situated the Government posts of Kole, Lodja, and Katako Kombe; still further to the north are two more posts, Loto and Lomela. A small steamer plies upon the Lukenye and takes some of the rubber from Kole and Lodja down to Lac Leopold II.; but all stores are landed at Dibele and sent up to these places from there, as the steamer service upon the Sankuru is far safer and more regular than that on the swift and narrow Lukenye. About three miles above Bena Dibele, also on the right bank of the river, are situated very extensive rubber plantations belonging to the Government, and under the control of a white official with an expert knowledge of rubber planting. For every ton of wild rubber exported from the *domaine* a certain number of rubber vines are planted at Dibele, the object being to compensate for the amount taken out of the country. The plantations are in the



forest, in which long lines of plants are laid out, the place being cleaned of undergrowth for the purpose. The number of vines already planted must be enormous, but about twenty years must elapse, we were told, before any extensive output of rubber can be expected from them. We were very courteously received by Monsieur Lardot, the *chef de poste* at the time of our visit, and although we had been unable to inform him of our arrival in advance, he was quite prepared to welcome us and to give us any help that lay in his power. We therefore soon began to question him about the forest, and to form plans for our projected journey. We desired to see something of the Basongo-Meno who inhabit the right bank of the Sankuru, and also of the Bankutu, a cannibal people of whose ferocity we had heard a great deal, and who resided in the heart of the forest to the north-west of Dibele; in addition to this, we wanted to study the primitive Batetela tribes of the country to the north of the Lubefu River, and thus connect our work with that already done in the neighbourhood of Mokunji. Monsieur Lardot informed us that we could make the acquaintance of a Basongo-Meno chief quite close to Dibele, in fact we could ask him to come and see us in the station, but that we should have to proceed to the neighbourhood of Kole in order to find the Bankutu. The road from Bena Dibele to Kole lay through the country of these cannibals, and although they were quiet at the time, Monsieur Lardot advised us to be very cautious in our dealings with them, for they were treacherous in the extreme. He had heard that around Kole they were worse than to the south of the

Lukenye, but of that part of the country he had no personal knowledge. During our stay at Bena Dibele we met a young Norwegian artillery officer who had entered the service of the Congo State, and who was proceeding from Lomela, where he had been *chef de poste*, to take up an appointment at Lusambo. This gentleman was able to give us a good deal of information as to the whereabouts of the Batetela tribes, and he advised us to go on from Kole to Lodja and there make a tour to the northward in the direction of Lomela. He told us that we should find near the latter place a tribe known as the Akela, of whose very existence nothing appears to have been previously heard among scientists in Europe, so we were naturally anxious to follow out the suggestion of a trip into their country.

Meantime we had to stay for a week or two at Bena Dibele to await the arrival of some things we were expecting to reach us from Europe, and which included a fresh supply of photographic materials without which we could not well proceed. Torday occupied his time with the Basongo-Meno chief mentioned to us by the *chef de poste*, but found him a rather unsatisfactory person, who was usually in a state of intoxication produced by drinking fermented palm wine. At this time I suffered a great deal from fever. The climate of the equatorial forest, of which we were now upon the southern edge, is extremely unhealthy, malaria being very prevalent. I experienced a very bad attack at Dibele, and I think that Torday and the *chef de poste* really believed that they would have to arrange a funeral, but I managed to shake off the fever, although

during the whole of our wanderings in the forest I was constantly worried by returns of it. The civilian in charge of the transport at Bena Dibeles was also very ill during our visit, and we heard that one of the two white men at Kole was at death's door with black-water fever, but this turned out to be an exaggeration. Owing to my illness I was unable to get about much in the neighbourhood, while Torday was engaged upon his study of the Basongo-Meno, and upon the compilation of some vocabularies of various tribes which he obtained from the soldiers, most of whom belonged to distant parts of the Congo territory, for the Government usually employs its soldiers at some distance from their homes, so that a man may not be called upon to serve against his own people, in which case he would most probably desert. Although duiker and other small antelope and pigs are common in the forest, I was too weak to undertake any shooting excursions, and had to content myself with collecting one or two monkeys, which I obtained without going outside the station. Life therefore at Bena Dibeles was not very interesting, and quite devoid of any incident worth recording. We were able before starting upon our wanderings in the forest to see matters adjusted with regard to the chieftainship of Misumba and Zappo-Lubumba. We told the *chef de poste* that at present he never dealt directly with the real chief at either of these villages, and he agreed with us that the arrangement of transacting Government business with only a simple elder or councillor was unsatisfactory to all concerned; he therefore summoned the real chiefs and the pseudo-chiefs of both villages to a meeting at Bena Dibeles. They came, accompanied

by a few retainers. The *chef de poste* addressed them, pointing out the absurdity of the existing situation, and suggesting that now the real chiefs should assume their proper responsibility to the Government for the conduct of their people, and should take over the emblem of recognised authority—namely, the metal disc worn on a chain around the neck. No one had the slightest objection to raise to this proposal; in fact, the delight of Pongo-Pongo and Zappo at thus getting out of a position which could scarcely fail sooner or later to become impossible, was very genuine. After the medallions had been handed over to their rightful owners, the *chef de poste* began to give a warning to the people of Zappo-Lubumba to be very careful in their treatment of the porters of white men who passed through their village; inadvertently he commenced to address his remarks to Zappo, but the latter stopped him at once. "Do not caution me," he said; "there is your recognised chief; deal with him. I am well out of all these discussions now; I am a nobody." The only person who did not seem pleased at the arrangement was the real chief of Lubumba, who doubtless had enjoyed the opportunity of making himself disagreeable with no fear of the consequences; Isambula N'Genga appeared rather gratified than otherwise at receiving the medallion, which he probably thought would enhance his dignity a little, but, as usual, he was too bored to take a very lively interest in the proceedings.

Despite the hospitable welcome we had received at Bena Dibebe, we were by no means sorry when the arrival of our goods by steamer set us free to commence our journey into

the forest and put an end to the period of inactivity which we had spent in the Government station. We engaged only about fifty porters to carry our loads to Kole, and as these loads consisted to a great extent of trade goods wherewith to purchase specimens *en route*, we had to reduce our personal baggage to the smallest amount possible. We left the remainder of our belongings at Bena Dibebe. Knowing that we were about to enter a country where extreme caution would be necessary in order to avoid hostility on the part of the natives, we considered it wise to take as small a caravan as possible, in order that we might be able the more easily to keep our eyes on our porters and prevent them causing any trouble in the Bankutu villages. As usual, too, we determined not to be accompanied by any armed followers, whose presence might easily be taken as a declaration of war by the suspicious people of the forest; our ten Albiní rifles therefore remained at Bena Dibebe, still packed as they had been sent from Europe, and we took with us no arms other than our shot guns and sporting rifles. We were determined to endeavour always to spend the nights in the Bankutu villages, however inhospitably we might be received, for we hoped in this way to be able to gather a little information about the people, which we could not hope to obtain by simply passing through their villages and camping in the forest, although the latter course might possibly be rather the safer one. We despatched our carriers overland to Pakoba, a Basongo-Meno village near the Sankuru, about ten miles to the west of Bena Dibebe, while we ourselves proceeded down the river in a large dug-out, dis-

embarking on the right bank to walk on to Pakoba, which lies a mile from the water. The bank, although the dry season had really commenced, for the month of May was now well advanced, was extremely swampy, but we were met by the chief of Pakoba, who showed us the least muddy way to the village, and we arrived shortly before sundown, before several of our loads had come from Dibeles. The Basongo-Meno of Pakoba were about as enthusiastic in their welcome to us as their kinsmen of Zappo-Lubumba had been. They made excuses to avoid either giving or selling us any chickens, and took very little interest in our arrival. The lack of fresh food, however, did not inconvenience us, for we had brought a crate full of live fowls from Dibeles, and our men were all supplied with a store of provisions, so the surliness of the Basongo-Meno only resulted in loss of trade to the village, and the night passed without any unpleasantness or discomfort.

Next day we marched for six hours to the Bankutu village of Twipolo. The way lay in a northerly direction through forest, with scarcely a clearing to break the monotony of walking hour after hour in the gloom of the woods, unable to see ten yards on either hand. The ground was rather uneven, the road (or rather narrow track) crossing as many as ten little streams, each being at the bottom of a steep-sided ravine, the climbing in and out of which was rather trying in the oppressive heat of the forest, particularly for any one who, like myself, had only partially recovered from the effects of a very sharp go of fever. On the way we passed a deserted camp built by Batetela rubber collectors. These people evidently believe in

making themselves at home when out in the forest in search of rubber. The huts constituting this camp (and several other similar camps we subsequently passed through) were, of course, only of a temporary nature, but they must have been quite as weather-proof, before they had been allowed to fall in, as the houses occupied by the Batetela in their villages. Each hut had a bed-frame raised several inches from the ground, upon which mats had been placed to sleep on; and we saw outside the houses, placed in circles around the spots where fires had evidently been, stakes driven into the ground and lashed together in an ingenious imitation of European deck chairs, the seats being made of roughly plaited vines. But the most remarkable thing about the camp was a scaffold or tower, about ten or twelve feet in height, situated in the centre of the group of huts. We soon learned the reason for the existence of this tower, the like of which we had not previously seen. The Batetela who used the camps had left their own country, and in their search for the rubber vine had entered the territory of the Bankutu.

Between the Batetela and the Bankutu a sort of desultory border warfare is continually taking place, accordingly the Bankutu would be only too glad of an opportunity to plunder a Batetela camp, killing any defenceless people they might find therein, and carrying off their bodies to be eaten in the village. While the Batetela are absent collecting rubber, a guard is always left in camp, one of whom acts as a sentry on the top of the scaffold, from which elevated position he can look down upon the tangle of undergrowth surrounding the camp

and, by detecting the slightest movement of the bushes, apprise his comrades of the stealthy approach of the Bankutu, which would not be noticed by sentries standing on the ground before the enemy had come so near as to be able to use his deadly poisoned arrows from behind the cover of the underwood. Directly the sentry gives the alarm, the signalling drum, already mentioned as being used around Mokunji, is beaten, sending the alarm far away into the forest, and summoning the rubber collectors, who hasten back to defend their camp. As a rule the Bankutu then make off, for, as I shall show later on, their method of warfare inclines them more to sniping and surprising unsuspecting enemies than to risking loss to themselves in a pitched battle. Obviously the look-out on the tower would be of little use in the case of a night attack, but, like many negroes, the Bankutu do not like to move about at night, and, consequently, their raids on the Batetela are far less serious than they might be. At Twipolo we entered the first Bankutu village we had seen. These villages lie in the heart of the forest, so closely surrounded by the woods that the one street, bordered on each side by huts, of which they consist, is rather a mere widening of the track than a clearing in the forest. One comes upon the villages quite suddenly, and unless one has heard the crowing of a cock or the whistling of the emerald cuckoo (a bird which is seldom to be found unless there be a clearing of some sort close at hand), one steps out of the forest into the village before one has realised that there is a human habitation within miles. The villages themselves though small and, usually on the approach of strangers,





A BANKUTU CANNIBAL.



A BANKUTU VILLAGE.



practically deserted, are neat and very picturesque. The houses are rectangular, and are built of the bark of trees neatly fastened to a framework of stakes and thatched with leaves; next to the pretty decorated houses of the Bushongo of Misumba, the bark huts of the Bankutu are the neatest we saw during our wanderings in the Kasai. But the people themselves are by no means so prepossessing. What a contrast they form to the tall dignified Bushongo of the plains to the south of the Sankuru! Small and very dirty in appearance, superstitious, timid, and treacherous, they appear to have been influenced by the oppressive atmosphere and almost ghostly gloom of their native forest. As some plants require the rays of the sun and the fresh air to develop them, so it appears to be with the negro. The Bushongo of the plains are a fine race of men with a dignity and certain grace of manner which cannot fail to attract the attention of the European who visits them; they have evolved for themselves a high state of civilisation before the white man ever set foot in their country; they have developed to a greater degree than most, if not all, the natives of equatorial Africa such civilised arts as weaving, embroidery, and wood carving. The Bankutu, on the other hand, are undersized and ugly, sullen and disagreeable in their manner, and, with the exception of the building of huts, the only art that has been developed to any extent among them is the art of killing their fellow-men by stealth.

When a white man first commences a stay among negroes he usually considers them all to be ugly, and finds a great difficulty in distinguishing individuals from one

another or in recognising natives whom he has previously met. As time goes on, however, he becomes so used to the negro type of countenance that his ideas as to its ugliness undergo a change, and he soon comes to regard many individuals as quite handsome; for he begins to judge more by a bright and ready smile or an open honest countenance than by a European standard of regularity of feature. I do not think, however, that any one could find much to admire in the appearance of the Bankutu. They have a "shifty" look about them—a manner which displays no inclination to trust or to be trusted. One can readily understand that the people of the plains may regard the inhabitants of the equatorial forest as of supernatural origin, as the Bushongo regard the Batwa dwarfs. These dwarfs, whom I have mentioned in the pages dealing with our stay at Lusambo, must be very similar in character to the Bankutu, but, having long since been subjugated by neighbouring tribes, they are split up, and therefore do not constitute such a menace to the peace of the district as do the people whose country we were now passing through. The Bankutu do not exactly increase their beauty by the scars with which both sexes ornament their faces, the women in particular rendering their countenances more repulsive than nature has made them by rows of raised scars reaching from the temples across the cheeks to the jaw-bone. More debased types of the human family than these women it would be difficult to imagine. The men allow their hair to grow long, and the care they bestow upon twisting it into innumerable little tails hanging back from the forehead, saturated with palm oil, is about all the

attention they pay to their toilet, for, unlike most negroes, the Bankutu *never wash*; when crossing a river they incidentally remove a little of the filth from their lower limbs, and, I believe, when their condition has become too awful for words, they will sometimes scrape themselves with a knife; but washing in the streams is an unknown habit with them. At Twipolo we were most ungraciously received. We saw very few people about the village and no one who could possibly have been a man of importance; no act of violence, however, was attempted against our carriers, and no objection was raised to our pitching our tents in the village. Shortly after our arrival we heard some angry discussion taking place at the entrance to the village, and, fearing that our porters might have caused trouble with the Bankutu, we hastened to discover what was the matter. We found that some Batetela porters who had carried loads from Bena Dibeles to Kole were complaining that, upon their return journey, the Bankutu had placed poisoned spikes in the track, concealed by leaves, doubtless in order to kill them to serve as food at a cannibal feast. This sort of occurrence is, I believe, by no means rare, although the Bankutu living on the way from Dibeles to Kole as a rule allow caravans conveying Government property to pass unmolested. In defence of their action the Bankutu stated that the Batetela had stolen some poultry belonging to the village. We were by no means pleased at the possibility of a breach of the peace, which would almost certainly have led to our being attacked ourselves, so Torday called the Batetela aside and advised them to do nothing in the matter on their own account, but

to complain to the *chef de poste* at Bena Dibebe; this they agreed to do, still bitterly complaining at the treacherous and, according to themselves, unprovoked attempt which had been made upon them. Early next morning they departed for Bena Dibebe and we commenced a four and a half hours' march to the village of Gamba. As a rule, when travelling in the Congo one allows one's porters to take their own time over the journey, provided, of course, that they turn up with their loads in reasonable time at the village where the night is to be spent. This is far more convenient for the men, who can rest for a few minutes when they feel inclined, than for them to march in a body, halting only when the white man, who is not carrying a load, thinks that he would like to sit down by the wayside and enjoy a pipe. The porters often prefer to travel much faster than the white man and then rest for some time, and, very often, bathe in a stream before continuing the journey. By allowing the men to do this one certainly contributes to their comfort, and the loads are almost always brought punctually to their destination. Our men were marching this way through the Bankutu country, for we knew that Government loads were allowed by the Bankutu to pass unmolested, and we considered that our men would be just as safe travelling in this way as if they marched in close attendance upon ourselves.

As we entered Gamba most of our men had already reached the village, and one of them was leisurely walking up the street when I noticed a local native, concealed from the view of our porters by a hut, tentatively drawing at his bowstring, upon which an arrow was placed, and staring

so longingly at the back of our carrier that he had not heard our approach. Upon our demanding sharply what he was doing the little man vanished into the forest behind the houses. He *may* not have intended to shoot; but our carrier was a big fleshy man who might well tempt the arrow of such an insatiable cannibal as the Bankutu. We paid no further attention to the incident, and no active hostility was shown to us at Gamba. Our reception was of the kind to which we soon grew accustomed in the Bankutu country. We found but few people about the village, and were met by an ill-conditioned youth, who appeared to be in charge of the place. We inquired if we could see the chief, whereupon the youth informed us that he was that dignitary. This was so obviously false that we said that we did not believe it. "The chief is dead," replied the boy. We inquired for the elders; they too were dead. We asked if food would be sold to our porters, but were told that the manioc had all been destroyed by wild pigs and no food existed in the village. Could we buy any chickens? No poultry was kept here (and this despite the fact that we could see many fowls about the place). "Very well," we said, "we have sufficient for our men and ourselves to eat; will you show us where to obtain drinking water." "We have no water except when it rains," was the answer. This reception is typical of the way in which the Bankutu treat visitors to their country. Needless to say, a clear stream was found by our men in a very few minutes (one way of finding water being to follow the village dogs at sundown), and it cannot be imagined that the natives hoped we could believe such a tale about scarcity of water in so

damp a place as the forest. We were careful never to display annoyance at the treatment we received, although it is rather trying to one's temper, never very good in the terrible forest climate, to be greeted with this sort of thing when arriving in a village tired after a march, and later on we managed to induce the youth who posed as chief to come and talk to us. We began through him to try and buy a few things in the village. We selected an arrow and offered a high price for it; the offer was refused. We then steadily raised our offer until it reached quite ridiculous proportions, but all to no purpose; the Bankutu were evidently determined not to trade with us. Nor could we obtain any great amount of information at Gamba, for we had to rely mainly upon our own observation, and therefore could glean nothing of the social organisation, &c., of the tribe. In the course of conversation, however, we learned that all the other Bankutu villages were in the habit of frequently eating human flesh, but were assured that the people of Gamba were far too virtuous to do anything so horrible. Curiously enough we heard a similar tale in other villages, the inhabitants of the place we happened to be in always claiming to be the only Bankutu who were not cannibals! Later on we found out a good deal more about these savages, and were able to realise how difficult it is for the white man to enter into any negotiations with them. I have stated that we never saw any one whom we really believed to be the chief or even an elder of a village. It appears that every man of the Bankutu has two huts, one in the villages such as we have seen, and another some distance off in the forest; he keeps all his valuables at his forest hut, and near to it are his



plantations. Upon the approach of strangers the people make off into the woods, and take up their residence in their forest dwellings which are scattered about, not grouped together in hamlets, and therefore are extremely difficult to find. The villages, which contain nothing of value, are left in charge of a few slaves, or of such of the Bankutu as may care to remain and catch a glimpse of the strangers. The Bankutu would lose practically nothing were the intruders to burn their villages to the ground; for the erection of a new settlement would occupy but little time, and, in the meanwhile, the natives could reside in their "country houses" in the depth of the forest. Not long before our visit to this country a Government official had determined by hook or by crook to become acquainted with the dignitaries of a certain Bankutu village. Upon arriving at the place accompanied by an escort of troops, he found not a soul in the village. Having plenty of provisions and any amount of time to spare, he decided to quietly settle down and await the return of the people. Day after day went by and still the Bankutu failed to put in an appearance, and at last the official, called away by other duties, was obliged to leave without so much as setting eyes on a native, although doubtless his own movements and those of his men were closely watched by Bankutu concealed in the forest. The white man probably knew nothing of the existence of other huts in the woods, or he would not have wasted his time. As I have said one sees no plantations when marching along the roads, but this is not only the case in the Bankutu country; in many districts where the natives grow food-

stuffs in large quantities the fields are situated in out-of-the-way places so as to escape the notice of the passer-by, whereas in other places, which really produce no more, acre after acre of plantations are to be seen. The best way to gain an idea of the amount of land under cultivation is to get some local native to accompany you in search of guinea fowl, for these birds are always to be found near the fields. The white man who merely passes through a district and stays only in the villages cannot hope to form any accurate opinion of the extent to which the natives cultivate their land. After leaving Gamba we marched through an open space about nine miles long, but quite narrow, the first piece of really open country we had met with since leaving the Sankuru, and arrived at a village where we met with a better reception, although I think it highly improbable that even here, at Chenjo, we came in contact with the real chief. The Bankutu clearly could not make us out. We could not be Government officials, as we were unescorted by troops, and therefore had presumably not come to inquire into any of the acts of violence towards their neighbours, of which, no doubt, every hamlet we passed through had been guilty; traders and missionaries had not, at the time of our visit, entered the country, so the Bankutu could not have mistaken us for either of the two other kinds of white men known in the Congo; we bore a good reputation as peaceful travellers, who appeared to want nothing except to purchase articles which the natives had never previously had a chance to sell, and we were prepared to pay exorbitant prices for them. Altogether the reason of our visit was a mystery to the Bankutu; and very likely the fact that we aroused their

curiosity contributed largely to the safety of our passage through their territory. At the village of Asenge, only one hour's march from the Lukenye River, which we reached after eight hours' trying walk through the forest, we were also fairly well received, but we arrived too late to observe much of our surroundings. One curious thing, however, we did notice, and that was the presence of a couple of lads, who continually nodded their heads until it seemed as if they must inevitably fall from their bodies. Upon inquiring the reason for this extraordinary proceeding we were told that it was part of a cure for stomach-ache! We subsequently learned, however, that the lads were apprenticed to the local witch-doctor, and the necessity for ceaselessly nodding the head was part of the mystic ceremony connected with their initiation into his magic art.

The next day we hurried on to Kole, on the shore of the Lukenye River. The Government station lies upon the right bank, about forty feet above the water's edge, and is built in a space cleared of trees, in the midst of the densest forest, which is just large enough to allow room for the houses of the two white officials, the rubber houses, stores, and quarters of the fifty soldiers and the workmen, and a fairly large parade ground. The bungalows are built of the stems of palm leaves, through which sufficient air can pass to relieve the oppressive heat in the day time, but which admit a good deal of damp at night. Upon our arrival we were welcomed by Lieutenant Pepper, the *chef de poste*, and by his assistant, the white N.C.O., who had recently been ill with what he imagined was blackwater fever, but which in reality had turned out to be a severe attack of

bilious fever. The *chef de poste* at once remarked that he considered we had run a great risk in passing through the Bankutu villages unattended by an armed force; upon hearing our reasons for so doing he agreed that we had chosen the wisest course, in fact the only one open to travellers who wanted to see the Bankutu. Conversation then turned upon these charming cannibals, and we learned from Monsieur Peffer something of the difficulties with which a Government official is surrounded in this district. The people around Kole are so hostile to the white man that the place is really never free from the possibility of attack; indeed, so possible is a rising of the natives at any moment that cassava is planted between the buildings actually within the station to avoid the loss of men which would ensue were it necessary to go out into the woods to fetch provisions from plantations situated at even a little distance from the post, in addition to which women working in isolated fields would never be safe from the arrows of any Bankutu who might happen to pass by even in times of so-called peace. The following incident may give some idea of the treatment white men and their native employes may expect at the hands of the Bankutu. A few days march from Kole there exists a section of the Bankutu tribe known as the Tono. These people had never in any way been subjugated by the white man's Government, and had plundered and murdered their neighbours at their own sweet will. The *chef de poste* at Kole determined to try and win their confidence by kindness. He accordingly sent two messengers to them requesting their chief to call upon him and to make friends with him, saying that on no



A VILLAGE IN THE EQUATORIAL FOREST.



BANKUTU BARK HUTS.



account would he demand any taxes, and guaranteeing the absolute safety of any of the Tono who cared to visit him; he furthermore promised the chief a good present in trade goods if he cared to come and fetch it. A few days later the two muzzle-loaders with which the messengers had been armed were returned to the *chef de poste* by a chief who was friendly both with him and with the Bankutu, the Tono having eaten the envoys and having sent back the guns with a message to the effect that the firearms would be useless to them, but that the white man could forward them a fresh supply of messengers as soon as he liked!

The *chef de poste* knew that any attempt at reprisals on his part could only end in his finding a few deserted villages, and probably in his losing a number of men in the process, so he could do nothing but ignore the incident. Time went by, and one day the officer was amazed to learn from the friendly chief that the Tono were anxious to make his acquaintance, and if he would agree to let bygones be bygones, they would call upon him at Kole. He was delighted. He imagined that his patience with them had touched the heart of the Bankutu, and, no doubt, indulged in many wild dreams of turning his district into a happy peaceful country, where murder and cannibalism would be unknown.

Having pledged his word that no harm should befall the Tono chief and his followers, he appointed a day for a meeting at the Government station. The natives duly appeared, and, before entering the post, laid down their bows and arrows beside a little stream, coming unarmed into the presence of the white man, who, on his side, was

careful to avoid any display of armed force by letting his soldiers be too much in evidence. The interview was of a highly satisfactory nature; gifts were exchanged, and the official preached a nice little homily to the Bankutu upon the desirability of peace, the foolishness of eating messengers, and the pleasant conditions which would prevail if the natives would only trust him and come often to visit him. The Tono expressed their regret at having inconvenienced the white man by dining off his servants, and promised that they would never transgress again.

Then they departed, leaving the *chef de poste* very pleased with his day's work. On arriving at the brook beside which they had left their arms the Tono found two or three of the soldiers' wives washing clothes; in a moment they had shot them, and, carrying off their bodies, disappeared into the forest! So much for the good faith of the Bankutu. Obviously such incorrigible rogues require a severe lesson, and it would appear that after an outrage such as I have described a strong force should be sent into their country to administer to them the punishment that they undoubtedly deserve. But the Bankutu method of making war in their native forest is such that a military expedition would have but little chance of dealing a blow at them. The roads leading from village to village are the merest tracks, so narrow that one's elbows brush against the bushes on either hand as one walks along them, while the forest is so dense that one can scarcely distinguish anything even a few feet from the wayside. In such a country where any shooting must take place at the shortest of ranges, the bows of the Bankutu are at least equal to the



rifles of the soldiers, and their poisoned arrows are certain to kill where a bullet might only effect the slightest of wounds. It would be perfectly easy for the Bankutu to wait by the side of the track concealed in the undergrowth and quietly pick off the troops as they passed in single file, for flanking parties, if thrown out on either side of the road, would literally have to cut their way through the tangle of bushes, and would thus render the advance of the whole column so slow as to destroy any faint hope that might exist of its coming unexpectedly upon a village and surprising its inhabitants. The forest, which is almost impassable to troops attired in blouses and breeches, and encumbered by their accoutrements, scarcely hinders the movements of the scantily clad Bankutu. But the natives have other methods of warfare, hardly less effective than ambushing the advancing column, and absolutely unattended by danger to themselves. In addition to placing little spikes, steeped in deadly poison, beneath the fallen leaves on the road to wound the naked feet of the soldiers, one prick from which will often prove fatal in less than half-an-hour, they dig pits in the track, carefully concealed with a covering of leaves, at the bottom of which poisoned stakes are in readiness to impale any one who slips into them. This is a very common form of trap used in most parts of Africa for the capture of game, and the existence of which makes it necessary to walk with great caution when shooting in parts of the forest where such devices are employed. The Bankutu often dig such pits in their villages before deserting them at the approach of the troops, and place chickens upon them in the hope that the soldiers will be

entrapped when they attempt to take the fowls. Another and far more ingenious trap used in war is one which consists of a bow with a poisoned arrow set, after the manner of a spring gun, in such a way that the removal of a branch across the roadway or some similar obstacle will launch forth the arrow upon its errand of death from beneath the shelter of the underwood. These automatic bow traps are often set in the deserted huts, so that the pushing aside of the doors when the soldiers search the village will release the arrows. Upon one occasion the *chef de poste* of Kole entered a Bankutu village accompanied by his troops; as usual, the place was deserted, but the sound of a child crying attracted the officer's attention to the edge of the forest behind the huts, where he saw a tiny baby evidently abandoned by its mother in her hasty flight into the woods. Filled with pity he hurried to the spot, and, calling to a soldier to take charge of the baby, he was about to pick it up when the soldier pulled him forcibly backwards. The man had noticed a string round the baby's body which was connected with the bushes behind it. Examination of the bushes disclosed a spring-bow trap to which the child had been attached as bait!

These are but a few of the stratagems to which the Bankutu resort not only in time of actual war, but at any time when dealing with the white man or his servants. The *chef de poste* at Kole finds it unwise to go even the two hours' march inland to the spot where the Government station until recently had been situated without ten soldiers to whom ball cartridges have been served out. It is scarcely astonishing that warfare in the forest, where

the soldiers perish without so much as setting eyes on an enemy, is extremely trying to the nerves of the troops. The greatest success which a military expedition could achieve would be merely the burning of a few villages, which would be rebuilt in no time without even inconveniencing the natives; and the authorities strictly prohibit the burning of villages in war. The *chef de poste* at Kole, therefore, has about as thankless a task as could fall to the lot of man. In addition to the difficulty of his work and the risks he runs in the execution of his duty, his life is rendered miserable, and constantly threatened by the terrible nature of the climate.

Closely surrounded by the impenetrable forest, there is a lack of air at Kole which renders the great heat of noon-day oppressive in the extreme, while at dusk a light grey mist descends upon the station, so damp that one's clothes become wringing wet if one sits out of doors after sundown, and the woods emit a fœtid stench of decaying vegetation which is often nearly sufficient to make one sick if one is out in the forest as darkness comes on. The grey mist which is, I believe, common to most parts of the Congo forest, rises again very late in the morning at Kole, for the steamers which occasionally come up the Lukenye can rarely get under way before nine or ten o'clock, and I have known the mist over the parade ground to be so thick as to prevent the soldiers from drilling before eleven in the morning. Some idea of the amount of moisture in the air of the forest may be obtained when I say that a gun left uncovered in one's tent becomes red with rust in twenty-four hours. In the day-time the atmosphere of the woods resembles that of

a hot-house; at night that of a well. With a climate like this and swarms of mosquitos it is not to be wondered at that the white man is continually down with fever, and the presence of the innumerable tsetse-flies on the Lukenye adds yet another risk—that of sleeping sickness—to the already sufficient number that exist owing to the natives and the climate around Kole.

We succeeded during our stay at this salubrious post in becoming more or less friendly with one or two individuals of the Bankutu, and from them we contrived to learn a little about the manners and customs of that delightful people, in addition to their methods of war which I have just described. I have said that they are cannibals; but the term “cannibal,” which is, of course, applicable to people who only partake of human flesh at the rarest intervals in accordance with some ceremonial custom, is hardly strong enough to describe the man-eating tendencies of the Bankutu. They actually stalk and shoot men for food as other natives hunt animals, and this despite the fact that their country teems with game. But the most remarkable thing about them is that they *never bury their slaves*; no matter of what complaint he may have died, a slave is invariably eaten. The reason for this disgusting practice is the fear that the ghost of a slave might return to haunt a master who had ill-treated him, whereas if the body is eaten the Bankutu believe that the soul cannot return. The habit of eating slaves is carried to such an extent that a lazy slave is often sold as food, and in a quarrel between two Bankutu the aggrieved party will frequently kill a slave belonging to the offender and dine

off his body in company with his friends. It might possibly be imagined that people so debased as the Bankutu would fall upon a human body like hyenas upon the carcase of an animal and tear it limb from limb, eating the flesh raw as they rent it from the bones, yet such is not the case. Great care is exercised upon the cooking of human meat, and it is even served up in quite a civilised manner, in little rolls like bacon. I have not given by any means all the information at my disposal with regard to the cannibalistic habits of the Bankutu, but I have said enough to show that even to this day there exists in Central Africa, in the heart of the great equatorial forest, a people whose daily lives are as wild and whose customs are as disgusting as those of any savages who figure in a boys' book of adventure. To many people in England it may seem incredible that tribes can exist in such a state of barbarity at the beginning of the twentieth century, but, despite the opening up of Africa, the mines, the railways, the hundred and one ways in which European influence has begun to make itself felt over enormous areas of the dark continent, there are yet a great many out-of-the-way places where the savage is as much a savage to-day as he was, say, five hundred years ago. Some day, no doubt, the forest around Kole may be as peaceful a district as any in Africa, but until the Bankutu have been completely brought into subjection there can never be peace in the land. How to deal with such people is one of the hardest problems the Government has to face. It is, of course, possible that a given white man, who, possessed of infinite patience and tact, might by his own personal magnetism influence the Bankutu for good; but the process would

take quite an ordinary lifetime, and lifetimes are very short in the forest. The only course appears to me to be to encourage the establishment of settlements in the Bankutu country by some such friendly and progressive peoples as the Batetela, the excellent results of whose occupation of the north of the Lodja I shall describe in due course. I hear that some of the Batetela who mutinied several years ago when serving in the army, and who, after being a scourge to the southern part of the Congo, have only recently been captured, are to be allowed to establish themselves in the district around Kole. The Bankutu are far too suspicious to combine with the mutineers in any future rising against the Government, and one may hope that the ex-soldiers may soon be able to render their villages as prosperous as have their kinsmen farther to the east.

If to no one else, the forest should prove attractive to the naturalist, although its impenetrable character renders the stalking of game by a white man almost a waste of time. The woods abound in animal life, very much of which must be quite unknown to zoologists in Europe, and which will, in all probability, remain unknown for many years to come owing to the inhospitable nature of the land and the people. Monkeys are represented by many species, several of them doubtless undescribed, while pigs and small antelopes abound. We were lucky enough to obtain specimens of both male and female of a very small duiker which had not previously been brought to Europe, and which Mr. Oldfield Thomas has done me the honour of naming after myself, *cephalophos simpsoni*. This little antelope is of a vandyke brown colour on the back, passing through various shades to a light brown



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on the chest; its horns are very small. It must exist in considerable numbers around Kole, but one's chances of obtaining a shot at the wary little beast are extremely remote. The antelope family is also represented in this neighbourhood by a bushbuck, a sitatunga, and at least one other duiker. Elephant and buffalo are not to be found near Kole, and the Lukenye is too rapid to form a haunt of hippopotami; large game is therefore conspicuous by its absence. I may here mention that during our wanderings in the Kasai we never heard of the existence of any animal which could possibly have been the okapi; but I should not like to say that it may not exist in the forest to the north of the Sankuru. Our stay at Kole was not marked by any act of aggression on the part of the Bankutu, and passed off without any serious discomfort to ourselves, with the exception of sundry attacks of malaria, to which I was now very frequently subject. During our sojourn there the *chef de poste* received a visit from another official who really belonged to the administration of the district of Lac Leopold II., but who, finding himself with his steamer on the Lukenye river within easy reach of Kole, had continued his voyage to pay a visit to the *chef de poste*. Upon his return he narrowly escaped drowning, for his vessel was swept by the force of the stream on to some rocks near Dikese, and sank in a few moments, the European captain saving himself by swimming, while the Government official was rescued by one of the native crew. No lives were lost, but the white men and crew who were thus forced to take shelter in the forest were lucky to escape being eaten, a fate which overtook the passengers on the *Ville de Bruxelles* when

that vessel foundered on the Upper Congo in 1909. We had wished to visit the Tono, whom I have already mentioned as living a few days' march from Kole, for this sub-tribe of the Bankutu were said to manufacture a certain kind of strange currency of which we were anxious to obtain specimens, but such a journey was impossible. Lieutenant Peffer told us that we could certainly go if we wished to do so, but that he himself should insist upon accompanying us with at least thirty of the fifty soldiers which constituted the garrison of Kole. To go with the troops meant that we should never behold a native and would probably be ambushed on the way, so we abandoned all idea of carrying out an extended tour in the country of the Bankutu, from whom we could really hope to glean very little information beyond what we had been able to pick up from a few friendly individuals. We accordingly, after a little over three weeks spent at Kole, took the opportunity afforded by the arrival of a small steam tug to proceed up the Lukenye to Lodja, by no means sorry to leave behind us such treacherous natives as the Bankutu.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PEOPLES OF THE GREAT FOREST

THE voyage up the river was exciting, if not particularly comfortable. The Lukenye is narrow and very tortuous, with an extremely violent current, which renders navigation very dangerous. Just at the Government station at Kole its width is nearly two hundred yards, but here the banks have been considerably worn away by a whirlpool which exists just below some rocks, between which the stream rushes with great force. This whirlpool has its uses, for by pushing a large canoe from the slack water by the bank into the course of the whirlpool the vessel is set in motion and carried in a semi-circular course towards the opposite shore, upon approaching which a few strokes of the paddles will drive it out of the current into the still water under the bank; in this way one paddler can take across the river a canoe which it would necessitate, under ordinary circumstances, three or four men to move. I once shot a duck in the evening, which fell into this whirlpool; next day we retrieved the bird, which had been floating round in a circle all night.

Above Kole the Lukenye soon becomes much narrower, until at Lodja its width is not more than about thirty yards. The vessel which occasionally makes the journey is a stout little tug, driven by a propeller instead of the

usual stern wheel, to either side of which iron lighters are attached to carry cargo. The boat was commanded by a native mechanic, who hailed from Sierra Leone. In addition to the numerous sharp bends, often considerably exceeding a right angle, with which the course of the Lukenye abounds, many submerged rocks and "snags" formed by fallen trees add greatly to the danger of navigation. As the steamer slowly forces her way against the stream, often progressing but a few yards to the minute, the crew sit in the lighters waiting, with knives in their hands, to cut them adrift should either the steamer or one of the lighters themselves strike a "snag" and commence to founder; for if any one of the three vessels were to fill with water she must inevitably drag the others down with her. The striking of a snag is no uncommon occurrence, but the boats are stoutly built, and, while advancing slowly against the stream, collisions with a sunken tree are less dangerous than in descending the river, when they are swept onward at a great pace by the current. Any one who allows himself to think of unpleasant subjects will find plenty of food for reflection during a six days' voyage from Kole to Lodja. If he looks at the course of the river he can scarcely fail to begin to calculate his chances of coming out of it alive if the steamer should chance to strike the next snag rather more forcibly than the last one; he will soon satisfy himself that these chances are not worth much consideration, and will, perhaps, turn his attention to the native crew. He will find the men busily occupied in catching tsetse-flies upon one another's backs—for never have I seen so many of these pests as upon the

Lukenye—and his thoughts will turn to sleeping sickness. Having pondered sufficiently upon the curse of the Dark Continent he may turn his attention to the machinery, but a glance at the pressure gauge will only serve to remind him that a boiler explosion is another of the little accidents which appear likely to occur at any moment, for enormous pressures have to be maintained in order to make any headway against the stream. On the whole, it is better for one's peace of mind to take one's gun and keep a sharp look-out for duck, or for some strange monkey which swarm in the forests on the shores, until a bump reminds one of the snags, the prick of a tsetse fly recalls the sleeping sickness, or some weird noise in the machinery produces an outburst of English swearing from the mechanic and causes one to think once again of the boiler. The tug was so small that we had to sit on one little bench in front of the engines all day long, unable to move a step, there being only just sufficient room to enable us to occasionally stand up to stretch our limbs; immediately in front of us was the helmsman, upon whose back we amused ourselves by killing tsetses with a little whisk made of thin strips of palm leaf, to his great satisfaction, for whether or not the natives connect the fly with the sleeping sickness, they have a great horror of the insect. Certainly upon the Lukenye one sees forest scenery at its best. The swiftly rushing river winding in and out between banks clothed with impenetrable forest, the vegetation often rising in solid walls from the water's edge; the varying greens of the foliage, broken here and there by patches of white or red of some flowering shrub; the

graceful creeper palms, all combine to make up a picture very pleasing to the eye, but conveying, I think, an impression of the forest which closer acquaintance, in the form of marching through the woods, very soon dispels. Owing to the strength of the stream we saw very few canoes upon the Lukenye, but about midway between Kole and Lodja we came across some very primitive craft. These consisted solely of three parallel logs lashed together at the ends with vines, which were paddled in a sitting position by almost naked men. Of course the water swept freely all over these little rafts. At night we camped upon the shores, which were usually low lying and swampy, for the dry season (or what passes for a dry season in the forest) was now in full swing, and the river had receded considerably, leaving muddy spaces beneath the trees where stagnant water had been a few months before. It was in such spots as this that we had to pitch our tents, so it may well be imagined that the mosquitos, the damp, and the evil smells of the woods were not conducive to late hours; we used to turn in as soon as we had partaken of a hastily prepared supper. Once or twice we encamped in the neighbourhood of villages which lay a little way inland, and here the natives, primitive Batetela of the forest, used to come and sell us eggs, poultry, and plantains, receiving us in a very different manner from the inhospitable Bankutu.

Upon the sixth day after leaving Kole we arrived at the Government station at Lodja. We found there a civilian as *chef de poste*, and a European N.C.O. in command of the forty or fifty soldiers that constituted the garrison of the place. The first thing we did was

to inquire of the *chef de poste* if carriers were easily obtainable in the neighbourhood, for we had dismissed those who had brought our loads from Bena Dibebe immediately upon arriving at Kole, and we learned that among the more civilised Batetela, who occupy the country to the north of Lodja, porters were always to be found; so we sent off a small caravan to the Kasai Company's post of Idanga, on the Sankuru, to purchase a fresh supply of trade goods, for the articles we had bought among the Bankutu had cost us much more than we had expected, and our store of goods was already at a very low ebb. Meantime we pitched our tents at Lodja and awaited the return of these porters. Lodja lies on the right bank of the Lukenye in a small clearing in the forest, and it is, I think, a less unhealthy post than Kole, for it is scarcely so damp, and the mists at night are neither so dense nor so slow in rising in the mornings. It was now the so-called dry season, but in the forest at such a short distance from the equator—a little more than three degrees to the south of the line—rain falls pretty frequently, even during the driest months, and the country never presents the parched appearance of the southern plains during the summer. We spent our time at Lodja in studying the natives that lived quite near to the station on the southern side of the river, and in collecting specimens of the numerous small and beautifully coloured birds that existed in great numbers in the plantation of Lodja. We also assisted in the organisation of some sports, wherewith to celebrate the anniversary of the foundation of the Independent State of the Congo. The State was still in existence so far as we

in the forest could know, but we knew that the annexation by Belgium was being considered in Europe. These sports afforded us quite a lot of amusement, and for a day diverted our thoughts from the sterner and more unpleasant side of life, of which we had seen quite sufficient at Kole. The two white officials and ourselves turned over our personal property and selected such articles of clothing, &c., as we could spare to be offered as prizes for the various competitions, and in this we got a certain amount of amusement out of our hosts. The civilian *chef de poste* called us secretly aside and extolled the virtues of his military colleague, than whom, he declared, a nicer companion could not be desired, but at the same time he was, perhaps, a little inclined to show undue partiality to his soldiers whenever there was anything to be given away; it had been decided to keep the events in the sports for the soldiers and the workmen quite distinct, and would we, therefore, in offering our prizes remember that the workmen were always busy, whereas the soldiers at Lodja had a very easy life, and would we be sure to allot the greater share of our prizes to the events restricted to non-combatants. A few minutes later the military officer found an opportunity of having a private talk to us. No one, he assured us, could wish to serve in the same place with a more delightful companion than the *chef de poste*, but he had one little failing—he could never realise how much more important were the soldiers, upon whose presence the safety of the station depended, than the mere workmen who cut up and packed rubber for despatch to the river; would we, therefore, be sure to



insist that the major portion of our prizes should be given for events open only to the soldiers. Needless to say, we divided our goods equally between the two sections of the community, and the games passed off without any friction whatever. The sports were an unqualified success; every one in the place, white man and black, soldier and civilian, all worked their hardest to make things go. We erected a greasy pole, and measured off a course for foot races; the shooting range was cleared of grass to allow a good view of the butts, and new targets were improvised.

A start was made after the midday meal, the natives having devoted the morning to their ablutions and to attiring themselves in all the finery in the way of coloured European cottons that they could lay their hands on. Firstly, we all marched behind the bugler to the range, where the soldiers shot for prizes with their Albinis, and we attempted to give an exhibition of marksmanship with our Mannlichers and express rifle; after this we returned to the station (still marching behind the bugler), and the sports began. The greasy pole competition resulted in a victory for the village blacksmith, whose repeated attempts to scale the pole at length wore off most of the palm oil with which it had been greased, and rendered the ascent less difficult than it had been at first, when frequent failures had induced the other competitors to abandon the task. Foot races were of three kinds, namely, ordinary 200 yard sprints, "pig-a-back" races, and a race for teams of three natives who ran side by side, the middle man having each of his legs tied to a leg of his companions. These events produced a lot of merriment among the spectators, for falls

were numerous and disputes arose between members of the various teams when failure to "keep step" carried the middle man off his feet, but the distribution of prizes for the races caused some little heart-burning as some of the losers claimed a reward for having, as they said, run just as far as the winners. In addition to these events, various foolish games were indulged in, such as blindfolded men endeavouring to feed each other with spoonful of cassava porridge, all of which caused the greatest delight to the crowd, some of the spectators rolling upon the ground in paroxysms of mirth, while I must say that we, the white men of the party, enjoyed ourselves as thoroughly as children at a school treat. Little things please little minds, and one's mind becomes very small in the forest.

Before describing our journey northwards in the great forest, and the peoples we met with there, I had better give my reader a general idea of the natives whom we met. One of the objects of our tour from Lodja was to see the Akela people, of whose existence we had heard at Bena Dibebe, and concerning whose life and origin nothing was known in Europe, but before reaching the country of the Akela we learned that we should have to pass through the villages of several other peoples. All these peoples are Batetela, related more or less closely to the Batetela whom we had visited at Mokunji. These latter, as I have shown in an earlier chapter, have already begun to display marked changes in their customs, &c., owing to the influence of the "civilisation" which first the Arab and then the white man have introduced into Central Africa, but the Batetela of the forest are still for the most part in a very primitive state of

culture. But, at the same time, changes are coming over them, rapidly spreading from the east, and therefore one finds villages of the more advanced type, planned after the manner of an Arab or a European settlement, in the heart of the forest surrounded by the primitive hamlets of those sections of the Batetela who have not yet learned to imitate foreign ideas of house construction and dress. After the Arab wars several chiefs migrated into the forest from districts as far off as the Lomami River, and these more civilised people may now be found dwelling among their less progressive kinsmen, upon whom they are beginning to exercise an influence which will soon break down the conservative spirit in which most negroes view the introduction of new ideas and ways. Of course, each of the sub-tribes through whose territory we passed possesses a name; but what I wish to point out is that whether they call themselves Olemba, Vungi, Okale, or Lohinde Jofu; whether they are primitive or already influenced by foreigners, all the people I am about to describe are in reality members of the great Batetela tribe. The Akela belong to a different part of the Congo altogether, and I shall give a brief outline of their history when I describe our wanderings in their country. The Batetela occupying the left bank of the Lukenye River opposite to the post of Lodja are called the Olemba. They, owing to the proximity of the white man's settlement, are fast becoming more like the people of Mokunji than the simple folk of the forest, but in many respects they are still very primitive. We paid several visits to their principal village, Oyumba, and received calls from their real chief, not the elder who, as in the other places I have mentioned, poses as chief before

the officials. Oyumba lies in a large natural clearing of the forest, and is a neat, prosperous-looking village surrounded by extensive cultivation and by groves of plantains, which are very numerous in all the villages of the forest of Batetela. During one of our visits to the place we saw a woman whose cheeks were covered with soot and a man who had applied soot freely to his stomach ; this we discovered was a sign of mourning. Many negro peoples make such outward display of their sorrow at the death of a relative. We also noticed the curious habit of bumping noses when an Olemba meets an acquaintance upon the road. From the chief we learned a good deal about the customs of the people, some of which are rather curious. For example, they have a way of dealing with murderers which should certainly act as a deterrent to homicide : a murderer is compelled to publicly hang himself from a tree ! I do not quite know what is done to him if he declines to voluntarily carry out the sentence passed upon him, but I should say his wisest course would certainly be to hang himself at once when told to do so and not to let the crowd save him the trouble by despatching him in any other way. The purchase of brides, too, is remarkable. The usual price paid by the bridegroom to the lady's father is about eight copper crosses (a currency imported from Katanga), thirty-five chickens, and four dogs. But there is no delicacy whatever displayed in arranging the sum by the young man and the parent of his charmer. The former often begins by eloping with the girl, after which the price to be paid is settled at a meeting or series of meetings with her father. The old man points out the charms of his daughter, and the advantages which the younger man would



OUR LOADS IN A FOREST VILLAGE.



THE DOGS WITH WHICH THE OLEMBA BUY THEIR WIVES.



derive from an alliance with so distinguished a family as his own, and demands an exorbitant sum for the hand of his daughter. The bridegroom then, in a most ungallant manner, proceeds to call attention to all the demerits of his loved one and to offer as niggardly a price as possible. As the discussion proceeds, however, the offer is increased cross by cross, fowl by fowl, and dog by dog, until at last about the amount mentioned has been reached, when the deal is concluded. During our subsequent journey in the forest we noticed that some of our Olemba porters were always trying to buy dogs in the villages we passed through, and a few of them came back to Lodja leading two or three of these animals by strings; these gentlemen were contemplating matrimony. We became acquainted with the principal fetish-man of Oyumba, and we saw him perform a conjuring trick which would be quite sufficient to endow him with supernatural powers in the simple minds of his fellow-countrymen. He called upon us at Lodja one day just as I was about to start upon a ramble in the woods with my gun. Torday inquired of the wizard if he could supply me with some charm or fetish which would ensure me success in my search for game. The man thereupon, without any preliminary preparations whatsoever, held his hand below his nose and, sneezing, discharged into it from his nostril a very large seed; so large that it could not possibly have ever been got into his nose, and yet I am prepared to swear that I saw it come out of his nostril. The performance reminded me of the Egyptian Hall, and doubtless is as capable of explanation as the tricks of Messrs. Maskelyne and Devant. But tricks of this sort go a very long way towards making a

fetish-man a power in the village, a power which can easily cause a whole tribe to rise against the white man. Having rolled the seed up in the leaf of some particular shrub, which he obtained in the forest close at hand, the wizard handed me the "medicine," informing me that I should now be sure of obtaining sport. I will not spoil the story by giving any account whatever of the luck that attended me during my evening ramble; perhaps lack of faith on my part may have impaired the potency of the charm.

As soon as our supply of trade goods arrived from Idanga the *chef de poste* engaged about fifty carriers for us, and we started upon our tour in the north. The first day's march led us through numerous hamlets which had sprung up in the neighbourhood of the Government post, probably with the object of finding a good market for their produce, to the site of the old station of Lodja; for like Kole, Lodja had only recently been moved to the banks of the Lukenye from a more open yet less accessible situation a few hours' march inland. We passed by the important "civilised" Batetela village which is under the chieftainship of a small boy, some twelve years of age, by name Boo. This precocious youth already possessed five wives, most of them old enough to be his mother, and was an extremely civilised person as regards his dress. If there were in the district any white man with sufficient time on his hands to undertake the education of this young chief, I think that he could easily be trained to become a really useful and progressive leader of a people whose natural inclination to accept European ideas makes them one of the most promising tribes with whom we came in contact; but



unfortunately the training of young chiefs had not, at the time of our visit to the forest, received much, if any, attention on the part of the Government. Many of the primitive peoples of the Congo may not yet be ready to benefit fully by the advice which a tactful white "resident" would be able to give to their chiefs; but the more civilised portions of the Batetela tribe certainly are ready, and would, I am convinced, amply repay, by developing their country, the cost of maintaining white residents in their midst whose mission would be the introduction of European methods of agriculture and crafts. We did not spend a night with Boo, but marched on through an extensive patch of grass land, with the forest forming the horizon on either hand, to the village of Lumbuli, the site of the former Government station of Lodja. Upon arriving at the village we were met by Lumbuli's drummers and a vast crowd of natives and were conducted to the chief's house, and then in and out through the neat, tidy streets between crowds of natives who had assembled to look at us. Suddenly it occurred to us we were being shown off by the headman of our caravan, so we ordered this worthy to lead us at once to the old Government buildings near which we were to camp; we found that they were situated close to the point at which we had entered the village. It is not by any means pleasing to be walked round and round a large village like a circus procession at the conclusion of a hard day's march close to the Equator, and we were considerably annoyed with our headman for thus dragging our weary steps a mile or two further than necessary; but we preferred being regarded as a popular

side-show than as a nuisance (as among the Bankutu), so our wrath was not very terrible.

Next day we marched on, still through a strip of open country surrounded by forest, to the village of an important chief named Kandolo. On the way we passed through several villages inhabited by civilised Batetela, at each of which people hurried out to meet us in the hope of being able to trade, offering us all manner of commodities, from food-stuffs to parrots, in exchange for our goods. We could not purchase much while on the march, as of course our supply of cloth, &c. was packed up in bales and being carried by the porters, but we were able to select a few curios for the Museum, which were kept for us by their owners until we passed by again on our return journey. Kandolo's village forms a striking example of the prosperity which the more civilised Batetela are introducing into the forest. One walks for two or three miles through plantations of millet and cassava before arriving at the place itself, and as one draws near to the huts one enters a regular forest of plantains and bananas. Then one proceeds along a street fully twenty yards wide, bordered on either hand by neat plaster houses between which plantain trees cast an agreeable shade in the little yards or gardens with which every house is provided. The street is perfectly straight, and not one ruined nor untidy hut mars the neatness of its appearance. In the centre of the village stands the residence of Kandolo, a long plaster house situated at one side of an open space where dances and other ceremonial proceedings take place; from this centre other streets, as wide and neat as that by which one enters the village,

radiate through the groves of plantains. Upon nearing the village we were met by Kandolo's drummers, who played us up the street to the spot opposite to his residence where the chief awaited our arrival. Kandolo has been a soldier, and as soon as we appeared in sight he stood stiffly at attention by the wayside attired in an old English infantry tunic, a fine, tall, commanding figure. When we had reached him he laid aside the soldier and became the chief, stepping up to us and shaking hands before leading us to the house which he keeps for any official who may pass by. While we were resting in this clean and tidy bungalow, while our tents were being pitched outside, Kandolo learned the reason of our coming and proceeded to make us welcome. Firstly, he inquired if we wanted chickens, and if so how many. In a few moments the exact number we named was presented to us. This was a far more practical way of receiving an honoured guest than we had yet come across in our wanderings. As a rule a chief who means to receive you well gives you a far larger present of chickens than you require, in the hope, of course, of obtaining a correspondingly large gift of trade goods. Kandolo, however, had seen enough of the white man when on the march to know that too many chickens are an encumbrance, and he therefore very wisely asked us to say exactly what we wanted. We named one or two things such as palm-oil and native tobacco, all of which were at once forthcoming. The chief then inquired what he could do for us, and we replied that, as we intended to visit him after our journey to the Akela country, we would not ask him for any information at the moment with regard

to his people, but we said that we should be glad if he could let one of his men accompany us to the plantations, where we could try to obtain a shot at guinea-fowl. Kandolo issued an order, quite after the manner of a sergeant drilling recruits, and half-a-dozen men started out at once to look for birds. In an hour one of them returned and led us straight to a field where we found and shot a few for our supper, breakfast, and supper on the morrow. Kandolo was evidently master in his own village, and was just as friendly as he could possibly be. He presented our carriers with a more than liberal supply of food, and he instructed his people to bring for our inspection any objects they might desire to sell. The result was that we did a roaring trade in curios. The currency most in demand was leather belts, of which we fortunately had received a good supply from Idanga, but among the civilised Batetela almost anything emanating from Europe is greedily accepted as money. The idea of these people appears to be to sell their produce no matter at what price nor for what commodity, but to *sell*. We never met people so anxious to trade in the whole course of our journey. They are pre-eminently an agricultural people, and their fields, situated in the open land in the forest, are extremely fertile; they are ready and eager to plant anything of value that will grow. It appears, therefore, that much, very much, could be done to develop the resources of the country if a European were appointed to give these Batetela a little practical instruction in farming and to introduce new and useful crops for them to grow. I am sure that the creation of a post of instructor in agriculture would

be immediately followed by most striking results in the district just north of Lodja. Even without any direct encouragement from the Government the people have introduced many new crops, often obtaining the seeds from the garden of some white official, and everything planted seems to grow well in the rich soil of their country. In many other ways the natives of this district display possibilities which ought to be developed; for example, Kandolo employs a carpenter who turns out quite useful work with the limited number of European tools at his disposal.

In addition to being prepared to accept the innovations introduced by the European, the Batetela evidently likes the white man himself; that is evident from their cheery, genial manner and from the eagerness with which they crowd round to watch or take part in anything that he may be doing. Any native will always be only too pleased to accompany the traveller when he takes a stroll with his gun, whereas among some peoples it is quite difficult to obtain a companion for an evening's shooting. It always appeared to me that when a crowd of Batetela are watching a white man doing anything, they are looking on with a view to learning something which may be of use to themselves, and not merely to gratify an idle curiosity as do many of the more primitive tribes. Kandolo himself is somewhat of a dandy with regard to his dress. He always wears European apparel to some extent; and upon the occasion of our visit to him he changed his garments no less than eight times in one day! Up to Kandolo's village our way had lain along the route usually followed by caravans going to and from

the Government station of Lomela from the Lukenye River, and the country through which we had passed had consisted of little plains bordered by the forest. These plains may very possibly have originally been artificial clearings in the woodland made by the natives for their crops, for the Batetela cultivate so extensively that their clearings, if the forest should not encroach upon them, would in a very short time assume the dimensions of a plain; and it appears quite possible that the forest would not readily spring up again upon a soil from which much of the goodness has been removed by the cultivation of cassava, a crop which so impoverishes the ground that it cannot be grown in the same field for two crops in succession. After Kandolo's village we branched off the main track, taking a road to the west of that used by caravans, and we entered once more a country resembling in all respects, except the character of its inhabitants, the dense forest around Kole. Marching in the forest is, in my opinion, far more fatiguing than in the plains. It is true that one is more or less sheltered from the scorching rays of the equatorial sun (although it would be courting sunstroke to dispense with adequate head-gear even in the densest parts of the woodlands), but one is constantly forced to break the evenness of one's stride in order to step over roots or fallen trees, one has frequently to clamber over logs laid down in some swampy spot to form a sort of bridge, and often one is obliged to run as hard as one can lay one's legs to the ground to avoid a colony of driver ants, which swarm over one's legs in a moment and take hold so firmly of

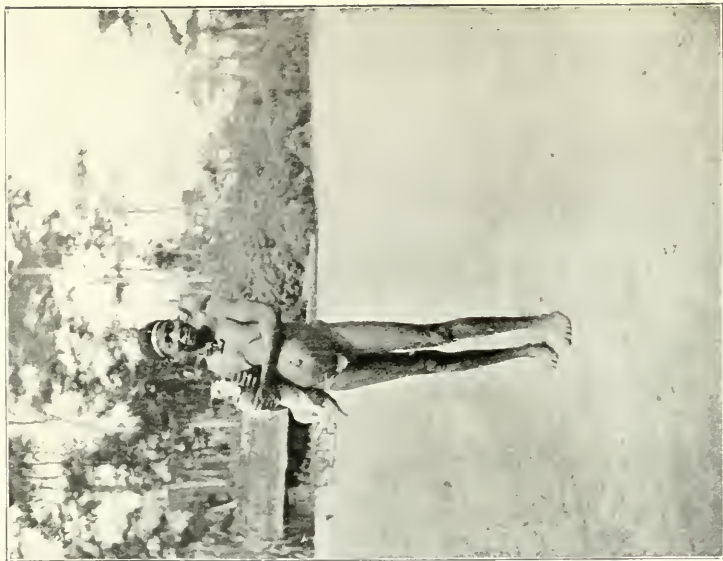
the skin that their heads are often left embedded in it when one endeavours to pull them off. In addition to this there is an oppressive sensation caused by the lack of air, for except during a tornado no breeze penetrates the forest. After even a very brief sojourn in this district one becomes so run down by frequent fevers that marching under the most pleasant conditions would be trying, and one wearily drags on mile after mile with leaden feet and aching head, longing for a breath of the wind that sweeps the plains.

The monotony of forest marching is depressing in the extreme. One cannot see more than a few feet into the woods on either hand of the narrow track, and the frequent bends and turns in the way limit one's view to a few yards ahead. One plods on hour after hour, day after day, without coming across any real break in the monotonous gloom of one's surroundings. Villages are numerous, but, like those of the Bankutu, they are situated in clearings so small as to be little else than a mere widening of the track, and plantations are rarely to be seen by the wayside. We marched for five days without coming to any break in the woods other than those afforded by the villages. One rises in the morning, after a long night's repose, with a swimming head and a feeling of lassitude which, if it passes off at all, only leaves one when the day is well advanced. One is always tired in the forest. When one commences the day's march the bushes are so wet that one becomes soaked to the skin as one brushes them aside where they overhang the track; later in the day one's clothes dry on one,

only to become wringing with moisture again when the grey mist descends in the evening, and the huts and people loom gaunt and ghostlike in the fog. Most Europeans in the Kasai district are carried in hammocks when on the march, and accordingly prefer to travel in the shade of the forest; but we invariably walked all the way during our journey, believing that exercise is a necessity to health, and both of us are convinced that a march in the forest is more fatiguing than a stage of similar length in the plains even under the hottest sun. Of course we always carried with us a hammock for use in an emergency, but only on one or two occasions were we carried in it, and then merely because fever or a damaged foot prevented us from walking. The forest, despite its terrible climate and damp oppressive heat, can be very attractive so long as one does not spend sufficient time in it to become depressed by its monotony. Parts of it are extremely beautiful. The little swamps and pools around the courses of the brooks are often really lovely to look upon, for the sun shines down upon the still waters covered with light green weeds and white lilies, forming a brilliant contrast to the gloom of the surrounding woods. There is much to attract one's notice even in the restricted area visible from the road—troops of monkeys of many varieties crash through the tree-tops at the approach of the caravan; strange and beautiful birds flit among the branches, giving one but a glimpse of their brilliant plumage as they go; butterflies of gorgeous colour are to be seen in countless numbers. All these are interesting or beautiful, and serve to some ex-







AN AKELA BEAUTY.



A VUNGI MOTHER.

tent to relieve the monotony of a forest journey. If one could only feel fresh and vigorous, a stay in the forest might therefore prove enjoyable; but, worn out by fever and fatigue, one fails to appreciate the wonders of the woods and longs for the open landscape and pure air of the plains.

The forest north of Lodja is so densely populated that we were too much occupied in observing the life of the natives whom we met to give way to the feeling of slackness which the climate produced. The first of the primitive Batetela tribes with whom we came in contact were the Vungi. These people were more scantily attired than any whom we had yet encountered. The women wore nothing but two bundles, or large tassels, of vegetable fibre suspended, one in front and one behind, from a girdle of rope, while the men wore small pieces of native-made cloth or the skins of tiny antelopes, put on in the same way, leaving the thighs naked. Their houses were small, and were very remarkable in that a continuation of their pent-shaped roof formed a verandah at one end of the building, beneath which the women cooked the meals and the family spent the day until driven indoors by the damp mist in the evenings. The houses themselves were constructed of the bark of trees and thatched with leaves. Most of the men we saw carried smaller bows and arrows than those we had been accustomed to see in the plains, for the tangle of undergrowth would render a large bow unwieldy in the forest. In the first few villages we passed through we came across one or two plaster houses, and occasionally saw a man

wearing some European garment, but as we advanced northwards these signs of the advance of a change from their primitive state grew rarer and more rare until, as we neared the Akela country, they completely disappeared. Among the peoples of this portion of the forest which I am now describing plantains take the place, to a great extent, of cassava, millet, or maize in the manufacture of dough, which constitutes the greater part of a native meal. The insides of the plantains are pounded into a sort of flour and then steamed or boiled, and eaten either warm or cold. Although meat is obtainable very easily in the forest, small antelopes, pigs, and monkeys being very abundant, the people of the district, in common with most Congo natives, eat very little of it; a small piece, sometimes eaten in an advanced state of putrefaction, being considered sufficient to lend a little taste to the somewhat insipid dough. In all of the numerous villages we passed through we met with a cordial reception. As we habitually marched by easy stages our approach was expected by the natives, and at almost every village a supply of food was laid out upon leaves in the street in readiness for our men. This pleased us very much at first, for if our carriers found a meal ready for them on their arrival they would not be likely to get into any dispute over bargains with the natives; but when we found as many as three or four villages upon our route, each of which had provided an enormous quantity of food for the men and whose chiefs naturally expected a correspondingly large present, we came to the conclusion that travelling in the forest was rather expensive. At one place, where

the chief was rather more civilised than most of his neighbours and consequently was determined not to be outdone by them in the cordiality of his welcome to the white man, no less than five hundred liberal portions of dough and meat were prepared for our sixty followers! The food, laid out on plantain leaves in two long lines, reached from one end of the village to the other. When the last portion had been put in its place in the line, a bell was rung and two men emerged from the compound behind the chief's hut carrying on a pole a freshly killed antelope for Torday and myself. Of course this kind of reception is extravagantly lavish, but it shows the spirit in which the Batetela of the forest are prepared to meet the white man.

When passing through a thickly populated part of this country one can scarcely fail to offend many chiefs by being obliged to refuse their food, for one's men soon receive so much that they not only have more than they can eat, but more than they can conveniently carry with them. The Okale occupy the country joining the Vungi territory on the north. These people are in many respects similar to the Vungi; but their women wear small fringes around their waists in place of the tassels I have described. Among the Okale we noticed a similar system of signalling by means of a gong to that in vogue among the Batetela of Mokunji. In the forest, however, the gong is usually a fixture in the village, consisting of a huge log, hollowed out, which is beaten with wooden mallets. We came across one extremely primitive signal gong; it consisted simply of two flat pieces of wood, laid across a hole in the ground, upon

which different tones could be produced wherewith to transmit a message. Cannibalism, once as prevalent among the forest Batetela as among their neighbours around Kole, appears to be fast dying out even in the most primitive villages, although no doubt many instances of it still occur which are kept secret by those concerned in them. A very noticeable feature in the villages of the Okale are the neat models of houses which are erected over their tombs. The dead are usually buried in the village, and the graves are surrounded by a fence to keep off the dogs and goats. Over the graves are built little houses, often of better construction than those lived in by the people, in and around which are hung baskets, cooking pots, and other articles once the property of the man who rests below. Among people so primitive as the dwellers in the forest it was not to be expected that we should be able to find any manufactures to equal in artistic beauty the wood carvings and embroidery of Misumba, but we procured a fairly large and representative collection of objects in daily use to be sent to the British Museum. The people, as a rule, were perfectly willing to sell their belongings (at their own price!), and only upon one occasion did we meet with a Batetela chief who declined to sell us curios. This worthy (who was very likely suffering from an attack of liver, and accordingly not inclined to be amiable) stated that he would prefer not to sell us anything, but that he would allow his drummer to perform for us while we sat at dinner in the evening! This honour we declined; we had all the native music we required when in the forest without accepting it as a favour from the chiefs. Very often upon our arrival in a village the local



A PRIMITIVE SIGNALING GONG.



A GRAVE-HUT IN THE EQUATORIAL FOREST.





natives would organise a dance, in which our porters, who, one would have imagined, would be too tired to indulge in this form of amusement, used to take part, keeping it up sometimes until far into the night. Upon one occasion, when the women were dancing, Torday playfully snapped his fingers near the nose of some dusky beauty, whereupon the chief solemnly requested him to do the same for all the ladies of the village in order that jealousies might not arise! The old man evidently believed the gesture to be some magic sign which would have some good effect upon any one to whom it was shown. Sugar-cane is very extensively eaten in the forest, but the natives, of course, do not know ordinary "lump" sugar by sight, and we used to get quite a lot of amusement out of them by offering them pieces of that delicacy from our table. They invariably believed that we were giving them salt, with which they were well acquainted, and their grimaces and expressions of disgust on tasting the sugar were ludicrous to see; although in reality they dearly love sweet things, the unexpected taste of sugar when they thought they were eating salt appeared to nearly make them sick. The lump of sugar would be quickly (and not very delicately) ejected from the mouth, but when the native had had time to realise what he was eating he would try it again, and then pass the lump around to the assembled populace, each of whom licked it until it disappeared.

On the way to the Akela country we found few opportunities for sport. Stalking is almost impossible in forest so dense as that through which we were travelling, so that to go out in search of buffalo, antelope, or pig would really

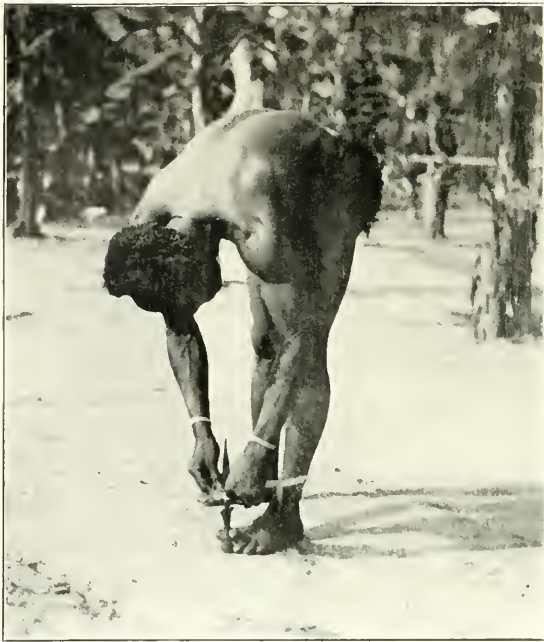
have been a waste of time. Upon two occasions, however, I did try for a shot at buffalo, which are fairly numerous wherever there are patches of grass land in this part of the forest. Although I approached very near indeed to both of the herds I attempted to stalk, the ferns in which they were concealed were so thick that I could not obtain a glimpse of the animals before they got my wind, or were alarmed by the slight noise which I could not avoid making as I progressed. I cannot help thinking, however, that had I succeeded in bagging one of these beasts, we should have added a third species of buffalo to the two of which we obtained specimens later on, and quite possibly the buffalo from the forest might have turned out to be unknown to science, as did the animals we shot later on the the Kwilu River. Judging by the size of their tracks, the small impression they made when moving fast upon soft ground, and the low cover which sufficed to hide them, leads me to believe that these buffalo are of a smaller and lighter variety than either the Congo buffalo (*Bos caffer nanus*) which I killed when we were staying at the Mushenge at the end of the year, or the Kwilu buffalo (*Bos caffer simpsoni*) which we discovered on the banks of the Kwilu. One or two single horns which I saw during our journey in the forest would appear, by their small size, to support this theory. From a few strips of skin which I found upon drums, &c., I think they must have been of the same reddish colour as the Congo buffalo, of which male and female specimens are to be found, stuffed, in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. Bush-buck and duikers are very numerous north of Lodja, as

is the ubiquitous red pig; and elephants are to be found in herds of about a dozen head in the country near the Lomela River. The whole of this country must be practically a *terra incognita* to naturalists, and a visit to it should amply repay the collector who cares to face the hardships which the bad climate renders unavoidable.

After passing through the country occupied by the primitive Batetela and their more civilised kinsmen, we came at last, about one hundred miles, as the crow flies, north of Lodja, to the territory of the Akela, a people whom we were particularly desirous of visiting, as nothing appears to have been known about them in Europe previous to our visit. We found them to be a typical forest people, very primitive in their culture, who had only arrived in their present territory quite lately, having migrated from beyond the main stream of the Congo within the memory of the older men. They are a fine, tall people, whose women enjoy a great reputation for beauty among the neighbouring tribes. How far this reputation is justified I should be very sorry to say, for I have long since given up attempting to judge of the personal appearance of African ladies; but one thing is clear—if the Akela women are really admired it is for their own charm, and not for any beauty which their costumes can lend them. They are more scantily attired than any of the people which we came across, even in the forest, where costumes are usually sketchy, for they wear no other garment than a very minute piece of cloth between their legs, which is supported by strings around their waists. Not only are the garments so small as to be scarcely visible, but they

are extremely rare; in fact, we could only find one woman in the several villages we visited who possessed a second "dress" when we were endeavouring to purchase an example of Akela fashions for the Museum! The men are similarly attired to the women, but their pieces of cloth are somewhat larger. The men, too, frequently wear neat caps, made of the skins of monkeys, to prevent the branches of the trees from disarranging their carefully "frizzed-out" hair. But the most remarkable thing about the Akela, male and female, is their lack of teeth. Many, in fact most of the tribes of the southern Congo knock out one or two teeth when the boy or girl grows up, or else they file away portions of the front teeth so as to form some definite tribal design, but the Akela, as soon as they reach marriageable years, knock out *all their incisor teeth*, in both upper and lower jaws! The reason for this strange practice appears to be merely the fact that it is fashionable. The absence of front teeth causes the lips, usually protruding in the negro race, to recede, so that many Akela have quite a European type of countenance. The usual means of removing teeth is quite in accordance with the barbarity of the custom. The village blacksmith places an iron wedge against the tooth, and hits it with a block of wood! The tooth is thus broken off short at the gum. A result of the absence of front teeth is a strange method of eating meat which we found among the Akela. They cannot, of course, bite off a morsel from a piece of meat held in the hand, as do most natives when dining, so they hold their knives, point upwards, between their toes,





AN AKELA CUTTING UP HIS FOOD.



AKELA WARRIORS.

and cut off mouthfuls of meat by drawing it along the edges.

Their villages are built in just sufficient cleared ground to contain the number of huts required, and are often very picturesque, for they frequently contain palm-trees. The huts are made of leaves, and many of them are so primitive as to lack walls, resembling the sheds under which the Bangongo work in the daytime at Misumba. But if their dwellings are of a primitive nature, the houses which, in common with their Batetela neighbours, they erect over the tombs of their dead are well built, neat, and tidy. Respect for the graves of the departed is more noticeable among the peoples of the forest than among any of the other natives we visited. One often passes deserted villages in this part of the country whose inhabitants have left them and built another settlement upon the death of a chief or some other important member of the community. In this the primitive Batetela differ considerably from their more advanced cousins of Mokunji, who, the reader will remember, were only too pleased to sell us the skulls of their dead. We did not collect any skulls in the forest; to have suggested that any should be brought to us would have grievously wounded the feelings of the natives. The Akela provide little houses for their chickens, a luxury to which most Congo fowls are unaccustomed. In their methods of warfare these immigrants from the north display a difference from their neighbours, for shields are still in use among them. These are hewn out of solid wood, but are remarkably light, and are large enough to afford ample shelter to a man crouching behind them. We

were not so hospitably received by the Akela as by their neighbours, and even had great difficulty in persuading them to lead us from one village to another, but no violence was attempted towards us, and the people appeared to be quite peaceful if not provoked by any act of aggression on the part of the traveller or his men. On the whole, we were not sorry when, turning southwards from a point about five-and-twenty miles south of the Government station of Lomela, and, marching along the well-worn caravan track which is usually followed from Lodja to Lomela, we at last reached that land of plenty and hospitable natives, Kandolo's territory, and thence retraced our steps to the Lukenye. Our wanderings among the Batetela had shown us what an extraordinary difference can exist in manners and customs and in general character in peoples occupying similar country; for as my narrative, I hope, has shown, no two tribes could be less alike than the Bankutu and their Batetela neighbours. I have already stated that when we were leaving the forest an idea was mooted of colonising the Bankutu country with the captured Batetela mutineers, and this plan appears to me to be an admirable one. The villages near Lodja, such as Kandolo, show what Batetela energy can get out of the rich forest soil, and the rapid spread of civilised ideas, emanating from the more advanced Batetela, can influence their neighbours. It seems quite reasonable to hope, therefore, that the colonisation of the Bankutu country by civilised Batetela will lead to the cannibals around Kole gradually absorbing the ideas of the new-comers, and thus step by step advancing from their degraded condition. The Bankutu is too much of a savage



to understand or appreciate any innovations introduced directly by the European, but he may be able to receive the seed of civilisation sown by other natives, and soon be ready to receive and even welcome the changes in his mode of life which the arrival of the white man must inevitably introduce among the native races over whom he rules. A scheme for the civilisation of the peoples of the southern portion of the great equatorial forest would be to introduce any useful innovations that may be acceptable to the progressive Batetela and allow them to pass them on to their neighbours; for the primitive peoples of the forest would be more likely to copy the ways of another native tribe than those of the white man himself.

We spent some days in Lodja after our journey in the forest, to rest after the fatigue of almost daily marching, and here our fox-terrier bitch, which together with a young dog we had brought out with us from England, presented us with a litter of puppies. With the exception of one, which died in a few weeks' time, all the puppies lived and thrived, an indication that hardy European dogs, such as fox-terriers, can exist and reproduce even in the bad climate of the forest. We gave away the father of the litter and all the puppies excepting one to various white men whom we met, but Sanga, the mother, and Lubudi, the puppy we kept, stayed with us until our wanderings were at an end, and never were sick nor sorry for a single day. At the end of our journey, Lubudi was given to some nuns who were proceeding to a mission station, but Sanga returned with us to Europe, only to succumb to an abscess on the brain, after enduring the captivity enforced by the quarantine

regulations and the rigours of one English winter. Poor little Sanga! She was a faithful companion, and I think that the shooting of her after our return was far the most unpleasant task I was called upon to perform in connection with our journey. She is buried in a Kentish garden, quite close to the cottage where she was born, and a little tombstone marks the last resting-place of a bitch who travelled far and endured many hardships and privations. She never loved the natives except our own "boys," but all the natives who saw her were most anxious to possess her, and used to offer us high prices for her. It used to be quite amusing to place her on a table and promise to give her to any one who would lift her from it. Several people have approached the table, but no one has dared to touch her!

Upon leaving Lodja we marched to Idanga, the Kasai Company's factory, on the left bank of the Sankuru at the confluence of that river with the Lubefu. The way lay through several outlying villages of the Bankutu, but these people were far less disagreeable than their kinsmen around Kole, and our progress through their country was uneventful. We were delighted to leave the forest, and, weary and footsore as we were, to reach a place by the riverside where travelling is done in canoes, and where we could work up at our leisure the results of our wanderings in the equatorial forest.

## CHAPTER VI

### AT THE COURT OF AN AFRICAN KING

WE spent a few days at Idanga awaiting the arrival of a steamer going down-river to carry us to Bolombo, whence we were to start upon our march to the capital of the Bushongo nation. During the greater part of our stay the Kasai Company's agent was absent, visiting the villages in the interior behind the forest which borders the Sankuru, and which at Idanga is a comparatively narrow strip of woodland on the left bank of the river; we therefore encamped in his factory garden, and occupied our time in labelling and packing curios, writing up notes upon the forest tribes, and resting after our weary marches in the forest. Idanga has its drawbacks, for there is little to be done there either by the naturalist or the ethnologist, and the mosquitos and tsetse-flies are more numerous than is pleasant; but after a stay in the forest one can sit all day and gaze with enjoyment at the view, extensive compared with any obtainable in the woods, over the fine broad reach of the Sankuru, at the time of our visit much broken by sandbanks, for the dry season was now fast drawing to its close and the water was at its lowest. Upon the sandbanks numberless temporary huts had been erected by the local Bushongo, who could be seen from the factory busily employed all day long at making and setting fish-

traps, by means of which they caught a lot of large fish, always bringing the best of them for sale to us. One day we hired a canoe from the fishermen and went downstream to Bena Dibele to call upon the Italian cavalry officer who had recently taken over the command of the post, and to bring away the baggage we had left there upon setting out into the forest. We found Lieutenant Morretti's civilian assistant in a very bad state of health. There was, I think, little really the matter with him, but he had allowed the gloom of the surrounding forest to get upon his nerves to such an extent that he could talk of nothing but death, and mistook a small piece of metal lying on the ground for the number-plate of his coffin! He was eventually moved to rather more cheerful surroundings, and, I believe, quite recovered his mental equilibrium. In the forest it is absolutely necessary to force oneself to look at the bright side of everything; if once one allows oneself to become pessimistic one is pretty sure to break down in health; and the bright side of life in the forest is not always easy to find.

While we were calling at Dibele a Government steamer came down the river having on board Captain the Hon. W. G. Thesiger, D.S.O., then his Majesty's consul at Boma. This gentleman had just completed a tour of some few months' duration over a large area of the southern Congo, in the course of which he had paid a brief visit to the capital of the Bushongo people and made the acquaintance of their king. Captain Thesiger informed us that he had seen many beautiful wood-carvings, chief among which were the portrait statues of the two old-time national heroes,

which were apparently regarded with the greatest reverence by the king and the people. We had heard of the existence of these statues during our stay at Misumba, but up to now had been doubtful if we should be allowed to see them. Captain Thesiger reassured us on this point, but seemed to think that there would be no chance of our being able to purchase one for the Museum; we dared not hope so much ourselves; but I shall have more to say about these statues later. Captain Thesiger gave us another interesting piece of information: he had recently visited Kanda Kanda, a Government station about one hundred and sixty miles to the south-east of Luebo, and had there found that lions had just appeared in the neighbourhood. From what we are able to gather, lions are unknown north of this district; although I have seen it stated that the Sankuru was their northern limit, I was not able to obtain any evidence to show that they have been found so far north as the middle course of that river. It has been rumoured that a lion was killed near the confluence of the Kwango and the Kasai some few years back, but I believe the rumour is generally discredited. Around Kanda Kanda the country is better supplied with game than the districts we visited, but even there the newly arrived lions had taken to man-eating to such an extent as to cause a panic in the villages. As soon as we had packed our curios at Idanga we were ready to start for the Mushenge, so the Kasai Company's steamer found us waiting to go on board with as little delay as possible when it descended the river on its way from Batempa to Dima. The voyage passed off without incident, excepting that one night during a tornado, our camp on the

shore was very nearly set on fire by sparks driven by the wind from the fires of the crew; only the dampness saved our tents from catching fire. In the matter of fires one's "boys" are usually extremely careless, making them in the most dangerous places, and one has to be constantly on the look-out for accidents arising from the placing of a candle too close to the sloping roof of one's tent, or some other equally foolish and avoidable cause. It seems remarkable that natives whose habitations are very inflammable should be so careless, but it is a fact.

At Bolombo we stayed for a few days awaiting the arrival of an answer from the king of the Bushongo, to whom we sent a message informing him of our desire to visit his capital, and inquiring if he would send porters to carry our loads from the river. In due course a number of men arrived, under the leadership of one of the Nyimi's (this is the title of the king) courtiers, who told us that his master had heard of our visit to the eastern part of his territory, and had expected to see us earlier at his capital; now that we were coming he would be pleased to welcome us. We noticed one or two differences, even among the porters who came to carry our baggage, between the Bangongo of the Lubudi River and the natives from the country around the Mushenge. Whereas at Misumba only the elders wore little conical caps of plaited grass upon their top-knots, this headgear seemed to be quite commonly worn by the people of Mushenge, and we looked in vain for signs of the lavish application of tukula dye to the person and loin-cloths which is so noticeable at Misumba; moreover, most of the men who came to carry for us wore

European cotton around their waists. We crossed the Sankuru in a large dug-out as soon as all our baggage had been transported over the river. We had not very much with us, for our stock of provisions was well-nigh at an end, and we were relying upon receiving from Luebo many cases of stores which should have been there since the beginning of the year awaiting our arrival. Also we carried with us very little in the way of trade goods, for we knew that there was a factory near the Mushenge where we could purchase such articles as would be most readily accepted by the natives. The country between the Sankuru and the Mushenge is hilly. The belt of forest that borders the river is only about six miles wide, and gives place to grass land, fairly thickly studded with small trees in which extensive patches of woodland are very numerous. Near to the angle formed by the confluence of the Sankuru and the Kasai the forest belts of both these rivers meet, and the country is therefore densely wooded. As one goes on southward towards the Mushenge the plains become more extensive and less studded with trees until one reaches a high grassy plateau about twenty miles south of the Sankuru which forms the watershed between that river and the Luchwadi (marked Lotjadi on the accompanying map), a stream that flows westwards into the Kasai. The distance from Bolombo to the Mushenge is only about thirty miles, in a direct line, but we marched by easy stages in order to see something of the villages we passed through, and did not arrive at the capital until the fifth day after our start from the Sankuru. The villages in this part of the country disappointed us very much after becoming accustomed to associate the Bushongo

with such beautiful villages as Misumba. In place of the neatly decorated houses which we had admired so much among the Bangongo we found dwellings of a similar design, but built simply of palm leaves, with no attempt at ornamentation, and little or none of the regularity with which the villages of the eastern Bushongo are laid out. The places were often very pretty, with their huts dotted about under the shade of fine old raphia or elais palms, but the beauty was the beauty of nature, and showed little of the artistic tendencies which we knew the natives must possess. We subsequently learned that the people of the eastern part of the Bushongo territory are famous for the skill with which they build and decorate their houses, and that we must not set up Misumba as a standard whereby to judge all the Bushongo villages. At the entrance to one hamlet we came across a quaint "charm" overhanging the road. This consisted of a square piece of wickerwork, suspended from a pole, which had been literally riddled with arrows, many of which were still sticking in it. At another place we found a very old elephant's tusk, of considerable size, firmly planted point downwards in the ground under a shelter in the village street. We learned that it was formerly the custom when the great king paid a State visit to the villages to plant an elephant's tusk in such a manner that he could lean back upon it when sitting upon his throne; the tusks so placed were never removed, but were left sticking in the ground as a souvenir to the villagers of the visit of their king. The tusk we saw was so weather-worn that a small piece of it which I brought away has not been recognised as ivory by any one to whom I



have shown it. I ought, perhaps, to say that this souvenir of a former king is not regarded with respect by the villagers or I should, of course, not have touched it, much less removed a piece from inside its cavity; we were always most careful to avoid hurting the natives' feelings by treating with contempt anything they might possibly consider sacred, for had we done so we could not have expected to gain their confidence and learn anything of their customs and beliefs. A negro is very unlikely to tell you any legend or piece of tribal history if he thinks there is any chance of your disbelieving or laughing at it.

Buffaloes are to be found in the country between the Mushenge and the Sankuru, and we came across the fresh tracks of one or two small herds, but we did not make any serious attempt to hunt them, as I intended to take a short trip in search of sport after we had settled down at the capital. Upon the fifth day we were ferried in small canoes across the lagoons around the stream of the Luchwadi, the boats winding in and out amidst a tangle of the most glorious vegetation, and thence walked the remaining five miles or so to the Mushenge. Leaving the mission station of the Pères de Scheut about half a mile to the left of the main road, we ascended the steep slope to the crest of the hill on which the capital stands and found ourselves almost unexpectedly in the village, which we had not seen until we entered it. There were no signs of any extensive cultivation by the roadside which would have indicated that we were approaching a large native settlement.

Upon our arrival we were conducted at once towards the dwelling of the great chief, but on reaching the gates

of his "palace" yard the king came out to meet us accompanied by one of the Belgian priests from the mission, who were preparing to leave the Mushenge in a few days, the mission station having been abandoned. The priest, after exchanging greetings with us, left us to make the acquaintance of our host, and we looked with no little curiosity upon the man who ruled over so remarkable a people as the Bushongo. Of medium height (short by comparison with many of his stalwart subjects) but remarkably well-built, Kwete Peshanga Kena looked every inch a chief. He was dressed in native costume; a very long pink loin-cloth, gathered into many folds around his waist, was held in place by a girdle in which was stuck a broad-bladed knife, similar to that carried by the meanest of his subjects, except that its blade was neatly inlaid with a design in brass resembling a crocodile; he wore a small conical cap upon his head, held in place by a copper hatpin, the sign of an elder, for only court dignitaries may wear hatpins made of copper. The only ornaments he displayed were two bracelets on each arm, of iron and of copper, an iron ring on each of his big toes, and a thin strip of zebra skin, imported from the far south, worn like a bandolier over one shoulder. But perhaps the most remarkable thing about the Nyimi's appearance is his face. I have seldom seen so strong a face in a negro; he has steady, unflinching eyes, a high forehead, a nose and lips which are quite fine for a negro, and a very well-shaped, determined jaw. He greeted us quite simply, and when he spoke it was in such a quiet, almost musical voice that one might almost have imagined, were it not for the Chituba language in which we conversed, that one was listening to a

refined, well-educated European. The Nyimi was attended by a few old men, evidently dignitaries of his court, and a score or so of younger ones, most of them probably slaves. He conducted us to a spot in the middle of the principal street of the Mushenge where we could conveniently pitch our tents, and then we all sat down under a shelter formed by the pent-shaped roof of a hut, which was waiting to be placed bodily in position when walls had been built to support it, while the king inquired our business in the village. Torday had heard that the Nyimi was an exceptionally intelligent native, and had determined to take him fully into our confidence. He therefore laid before him the objects of our journey. He asked if the chief had not noticed that, as the influence of the white man advances, the natives change their tribal customs; it was to write down and so preserve these customs together with the religious beliefs of the people that we had come. He pointed out how many native arts were dying out, and he said that we desired to purchase objects of native manufacture in order to place them for all the world to see in a large house in the capital town of our country, where were kept specimens of the manufactures of all the peoples in the world. Thus any one visiting the house would see the carvings, the pile-cloth, and the ironwork of the Bushongo, and would realise what wonderful workmen these people are. "Often," said Torday, "you give away some keepsake to a white man, but what becomes of it? It is lost, or in years to come no one will know what it is or whence it came. Everything that you or your people will sell to me will go to the big house I have mentioned, and there remain for all time as evidence

of the skill and greatness of your race." Thus he explained to the chief the uses of the British Museum.

Kwete at once grasped the situation, and remarked that the greatness of his people as manufacturers of objects of art was fast passing away; he would be glad, therefore, to think that their handiwork was being kept and exhibited, and he would give orders that any one who wished to dispose of any carvings, &c., should offer them for sale to us. With regard to the history and customs of his tribe, he said that he would himself furnish us with all the particulars he could, and that he would summon various old men from his country to supply any information which he himself might not possess; he wished it to be written down. Several times in the months which followed the king remarked to us, "Writing: that is the strength of the white man." Of course the Nyimi had heard of our stay at Misumba, and no doubt had been told that we were popular there, and had done no harm to any one, so he was probably predisposed towards us before we arrived at his capital, and he subsequently became our firm friend. Having welcomed us to his village, Kwete returned to his own dwelling, accompanied by his courtiers, and left us to walk over to the Kasai Company's factory to order a supply of trade goods, and inquire if our provisions had arrived from Luebo. The factory lies about three-quarters of an hour's walk to the south of the village, on the opposite side of a ravine in which there flows a little brook; the mission station is a similar distance to the east of the capital. We found the company's agent at home, and fell to discussing with him what goods to offer in exchange for



A BUSHONGO ELDER.



A BELLE OF THE MUSHENGE.



curios. He informed us that cotton materials sold well, and that cowrie shells were very acceptable as small change, in addition to the salt which is so commonly used as currency in the Kasai. We accordingly purchased a good amount of commodities, and then asked if any boxes had come for us from Luebo. Nothing had arrived. This was very annoying, for we had expected that our stores would have been waiting for us, and we had practically nothing left in the way of tea, flour, sugar, and the other necessities of life which one brings out from Europe; so we despatched a messenger at once to Luebo, asking for the things to be sent on without delay, and meanwhile settled down to exist on short commons and commence our work in the Mushenge.

The first thing to be done was to explore the village. The Mushenge is by no means so imposing a village as one might expect to find as the capital of the greatest tribe of the Kasai. The Bushongo are far too conservative in their ideas to have taken to building houses of plaster modelled upon a white man's dwelling, and, as I have remarked, the neatly decorated huts seen at Misumba are peculiar to the eastern sub-tribes of the Bushongo; the dwellings at the Mushenge are simple rectangular huts built of palm leaves, such as the natives have inhabited for many generations. Each of their huts stands in its own little courtyard, which is surrounded by a wall of palm leaves, about six or seven feet in height, so that in passing through the village one sees very few of the buildings themselves, the roadway being bordered by the walls of the courtyards. Between these yards is a regular

labryinth of narrow tortuous passages, which constitute the by-roads of the place, there being two wide streets, in one of which our camp was pitched, running through the village. As the Mushenge has no other inhabitants than those attached to the court of the king, the place is not a large one; I should doubt if it contains two thousand people. To the west of the village, just outside the cluster of huts, is an open space, cleared of scrub and high grass, where dances and public meetings are very frequently held. In the midst of his capital is situated the dwelling of the king. It is surrounded by a higher wall than any other houses in the place, and inside this palisade are innumerable courtyards connected by small doorways, in which are built store-houses, treasure-houses, accommodation for the king's wives and for his personal slaves, and a guard-room. The guard-room is situated at the entrance to the courtyard through which one must pass if one would visit the royal sleeping-house, and there are always a few slaves waiting in it to carry messages for the king, and to keep out intruders. These sentries are unarmed. At the entrance to the small enclosure in which the king's private house stands is a shed, beneath which the Nyimi sits when in council with his elders or when trying a case, for he acts as judge himself in all important cases; and here it was that we used to visit the king during the early part of our stay at the Mushenge, before we became so friendly with him that he would receive us anywhere and without any attendants. The private house of the king consists of a very large replica of a Misumba hut, with the black patterns worked on its walls which are so



noticeable a feature in the villages of the eastern Bushongo ; it is divided into two spacious rooms, in one of which is situated another rectangular house, exactly resembling in shape, ornamentation, and size a hut of Misumba ; in this inner house the king sleeps. The roof of the palace is supported by massive wooden pillars, elaborately carved, and in the centre of the little doorway is a beautifully carved door-post dividing the entrance into two. Door-posts such as this, some of them of great age, are common at the Mushenge, and one often sees specimens of wood-carving of an artistic quality, worthy of place in any European mansion, supporting the doorway of the most dilapidated leaf huts. The other buildings in the precincts of the palace are mostly of the ordinary pattern used in the village, but of rather larger size.

I have mentioned the fact that one sees no plantations around the Mushenge when entering the village from the north. In days gone by it was not customary for the Nyimi or his courtiers to cultivate any land for themselves, their wants being supplied by the other villages in the neighbourhood. It is therefore only quite recently that any plantations at all have been made near the dwelling of the king. Acting on the advice of a Government official, the Nyimi has now ordered plantations to be made around his capital, and has thus removed a considerable burden from his subjects, who had previously to cultivate sufficient land to supply him and his court with food as well as themselves. As a result many acres are now planted with ground nuts, cassava, and maize, especially on the western side of the village. These plantations are concealed from

view by woodlands, so that any one who does not wander much around the outskirts of the place might easily visit the Mushenge and come away with the impression that its plantations are extremely meagre, very few of them being visible from the paths leading to the mission or to the factory. During our stay of nearly four months at the capital we took our exercise in the form of rambles with the gun, and it was when out in search of guinea-fowl that we were able to form some estimate of the extent of the plantations. Many of the fields had only recently been cleared of forest or grass in 1908, but by the time these lines are in print the output of food-stuffs from them should be very considerable. In following the advice of the Government official with regard to the formation of these plantations, the Nyimi has displayed an inclination to introduce useful innovations suggested by the white man, which is characteristic of him, but which is not shared by his extremely conservative councillors. In days gone by the Bushongo have been a very mighty people; fifty or sixty years ago it was sufficient for a man to be able to say, "I am a subject of the Nyimi," to ensure his being received with honour in the villages of the neighbouring tribes. The more primitive peoples who dwell around them used to respect the Bushongo; they admired their skill in carving, weaving, and embroidering; they admired the glamour of the court of their king; they respected the ruler who held sway over such extensive dominions. But when the white man appeared in Central Africa, their neighbours realised that there are peoples more advanced, more powerful, and more clever than the Bushongo, and

the fact that nowadays the Nyimi would be prevented by the European from calling his people to arms and annihilating one of his weaker neighbours, has helped to lessen the respect in which he and his people are held. But the Bushongo, particularly the older people, are just as proud as ever they were. The inhabitants of the Mushenge despise not only all foreigners, but even members of their own tribe who do not happen to be attached to the court of the king. They have in their language the "bokono," which corresponds to our "yokel" or "country cousin," and is applied to the Bushongo who live in villages other than the Mushenge; these people are considered by the courtiers to be less educated and refined than themselves. In the capital are to be found many descendants of former kings, so its people are really the cream of Bushongo aristocracy. These people, particularly the old councillors of the king, are much opposed to the presence of the European in their country, and to the introduction of any of his ways. As a rule most of the high dignitaries of his court are not officially present when the king interviews a white man, but any one who knows them personally may find them in the background of many a group photographed by travellers, just mingling with the throng, but always at hand to hear what their ruler may be saying to the European. Most of the white men who have visited the Nyimi are probably in ignorance of the existence of elders of especial importance, but in reality the king can do practically nothing without the consent of his council.

In 1904 the Bushongo took up arms against the white man, but the king himself was much opposed to the rising,

which was practically forced upon him, so he informed us, when we became better acquainted with him, by his elders. The insurrection, it appears, was of a very tame character, partly because the Nyimi entered into it in a very half-hearted spirit, which doubtless soon spread through the ranks of his warriors, and partly because the Bushongo, having for centuries been considered invincible by their neighbours, had no opportunity of maintaining the military qualities which they must once have possessed, and had become more accustomed to the arts of peace than to the stern business of war. The Bangongo did not, I believe, take any part whatever in the rising of 1904, and their absence from the field deprived the Nyimi of some of his best fighting men. The present-day youth of the Mushenge is certainly no warrior; he is a typical "young man about town." He loves to idle away his days lounging about the streets or around the precincts of the royal dwelling in no official capacity whatever, but merely as a hanger-on to the court, and to sit up far into the night talking and joking with his friends, a habit which soon lowers him in the estimation of the European traveller whose tent happens to be pitched in the middle of the local "Piccadilly" and who desires to sleep after a hard day's work. The natives of the Mushenge sit up much later than do the natives of any other place we visited, and in order to recover from the strain of the gay life in the capital the children of the courtiers are frequently sent out into the neighbouring hamlets to visit their country relations.

Life at the Mushenge is certainly gay. A certain





BUSHONGO ELDERS DANCING.

amount of work is got through owing to the plantations, but the clearing of the ground is done mainly by slaves and the cultivation by the women, so that it does not fall upon the young men of the Bushongo; and as every third day is kept as a "bank-holiday," no one is overburdened with toil. The men can very often find employment whereby to earn some European cloth by carrying loads to and from the Kasai Company's factory, and the cloth thus earned is rapidly replacing the palm fibre material formerly always worn around the waist. The gaities of the Mushenge usually take the form of dances; the Nyimi is a most enthusiastic dancer, and likes nothing better than to hold State dances in the open space to the east of the village, in which he himself takes part. The first dance we saw was a large one which was held shortly after our arrival in the village to celebrate the conclusion of a period of mourning through which the nation had just passed owing to the death of the king's sister.

As the sun was beginning to sink a little and the great heat of the afternoon became rather less oppressive, the elders assembled in the dancing-ground attired in all their ceremonial finery. This consisted of voluminous loin-cloths of raphia fibre bordered by strips of the same material elaborately embroidered in patterns, and in some cases ornamented by fringes of innumerable small tassels; around their waists they wore belts covered with beads or cowrie shells, and upon their heads nodded plumes of gaily coloured feathers. They carried in their hands large iron knives, the hilts of which were of carefully carved wood. A throng of ordinary natives and slaves sat upon the ground to watch

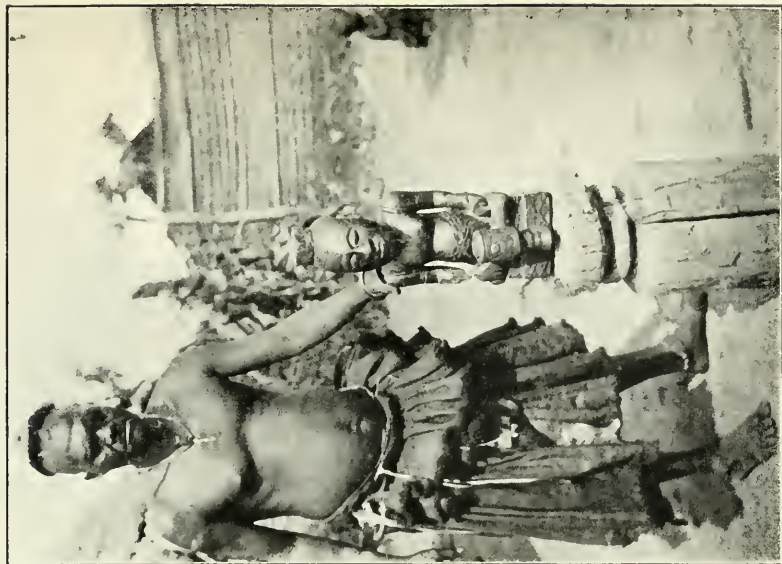
the proceedings, forming three sides of a square, the fourth side being left for members of the royal household. The king walked the hundred yards or so from his palace gates to the dancing-ground in a procession formed by dignitaries attached to his person, preceded by an elder blowing discordant notes upon a horn made of the hollowed tusk of a young elephant, and followed by his wives and their attendant women. The Nyimi has about five-and-twenty wives, but the number of women of the royal household present at the dance must have been close upon a hundred. The Nyimi, dressed in a scarlet loin-cloth covered with cowries, huge armllets and leg coverings of cloth decorated with beads, and wearing a large plume of crested eagles' feathers, sat cross-legged upon a dais under a canopy of mats, leaning his back upon an elephant's tusk planted point downwards in the ground. As soon as the king was seated the ceremonies commenced. Only a few of the people took part in the actual dancing, which to begin with consisted in single individuals executing a few steps and then sitting down, but later on groups of elders danced, leaping round in a circle and brandishing their knives, the brilliant colours of their feathers and costumes making up a brilliant picture in the light of the setting sun. Lastly, the king himself left his dais and strutted with a peculiar stiff gait around the ground, amid the enthusiastic cheering of his people, preceded by an elder who carefully removed any sticks or other small obstacles from his path. The elder who performs this duty possesses a title and occupies a high position in the court. We had been given places close to the dais on which the king had sat, so we had been able to



obtain a splendid view of the proceedings, and had found out from natives sitting near us who were the numerous officials taking part in the dance. We witnessed several dances similar to the one I have described, and were much struck with the manner of the king when he talked to the dignitaries who performed in them. He would walk about among the elders nodding to one, speaking earnestly to another, cracking a joke with a third, evidently taking care to avoid giving offence by talking to one more than to another or by omitting to greet any particular councillor who might be present. The countenances of the old aristocrats to whom he spoke showed clearly in what respect they hold their king, and how a word from him is held to be an honour to the man to whom it is addressed. But if the big ceremonial dances are interesting and even beautiful to look at, there is another ceremony, in which only one man takes part in, that is much more interesting. It is a ghost dance. Many years ago a henpecked chief devised a plan for frightening his wives into obedience by disguising himself as a fearsome ghost.

That is the origin of the ceremony which is still gone through periodically by the present king of the Bushongo. He tells his wives that he is going to visit a neighbouring village and will be absent all day. He then secretly retires into a hut near the royal dwelling and dresses himself in garments made of raphia fibre covered with cowrie shells; no part of his person is exposed to view when he is arrayed in this dress, and he even wears on his head a carved wooden mask rendered hideous by the application of red dye, to the top of which is affixed a huge fan-shaped plume

of eagles' feathers. Thus attired he walks around the village accompanied by yelling crowds and preceded by drummers. Every now and then he pauses in his promenade and indulges in a wild dance, leaping furiously up and down and violently shaking himself. Overcome by these exertions, which, overpowered as he is by a mass of heavy clothing, must be most exhausting during the heat of a tropical afternoon, he breathlessly sinks on to a stool and is fanned by his attendant courtiers while he takes a few moments' repose. At the conclusion of his tour of the village, he is placed (often together with one or more of his little sons) in a large wooden box fitted with carrying poles, in which he is borne shoulder high about the village by the populace, even grave-faced old warriors fighting for the honour of carrying the royal burden. The fact that the king's feet are covered during the dance and that he is carried in the box are interesting survivals of a custom now no longer observed. In former times (even until quite recent years) the king of the Bushongo was never allowed to touch the ground! Whenever he wished to move he was carried, and whenever he desired to sit down he sat upon a slave! Even nowadays should the Nyimi wish to sit, a slave will throw himself upon his hands and knees to form a chair for his master; and if when sitting upon an ordinary chair or stool the king stretches out his leg, a slave will usually interpose his own foot between his master's foot and the ground. There is exhibited in the Ethnographical Gallery of the British Museum an enlarged photograph of Kwete sitting upon a slave in the manner I have described. The person of the Nyimi is considered



AN ELDER DISPLAYING A STATUE.



THE NYIMI IN HIS GHOST-DANCE.



sacred, for he is believed to be the direct descendant of God. As a matter of fact the present king is the one hundred and twenty-first ruler of his dynasty to occupy the Bushongo throne. The succession to the kingship is in the female line. Torday was able to obtain precise information as to the names of all the Bushongo kings, for the king himself is obliged to know the names of all his predecessors, and there is, too, a court dignitary whose duty it is to carry the history of the people in his head, and many of the elders of the Mushenge pride themselves upon their historical knowledge. Torday checked the statements of all these informants in every way that he could think of and found no discrepancy in them. The work of compiling the history of the people, and of writing down and considering the various legends which bear upon it, constituted the greater part of his labours at the Mushenge.

From the legends, as well as from certain evidence in the culture of the people, Torday has been able to determine that, many centuries ago, the Bushongo migrated from the north, possibly from the Shari River. It is not my purpose here to discuss the history of this remarkable tribe, nor to relate their legends; it would take a whole volume to do justice to the subject, and Torday has, in collaboration with Mr. T. A. Joyce of the British Museum, already published the scientific results of our visit to their country; but I mention these matters to show how extraordinarily complete are the traditions of the Bushongo, a people to whom writing, of course, is unknown, and who possess no record of their history other than that handed down from generation to generation, and retained in the memories of

the elders. One figure looms large in Bushongo history—that of the King Shamba Bolongongo, the greatest of their national heroes. This chief ruled at the time when his tribe was at the zenith of its power, and he appears to have been a remarkably enlightened king. In his young days he travelled widely to the west, even reaching as far as the Kancha River; and in thinking of this journey one must remember that before the arrival of the European in Africa the natives practically never left the territory of their own tribes, and rarely knew more of the country around them than could be visited in a day's march. Shamba's journey, therefore, was a very extraordinary one. Furthermore, he travelled with his eyes open, and introduced among the Bushongo on his return many innovations which had struck him as useful during his wanderings. At the commencement of the seventeenth century this negro chief had ideas so advanced that he issued an order forbidding his troops to take more life in war than was absolutely necessary, and instructing them to, where possible, gain their victories by temporarily disabling their enemies. Until one has visited Central Africa, and to some extent studied the various tribes with whom one comes in contact, it is hard to believe that such humane and civilised ideas could have emanated from the brain of a negro despot. One is too apt to imagine that all African natives were, before the arrival of the European, as savage and as degraded as are the Bankutu of the great forest. The Bushongo offer a striking proof to the contrary. Another curious custom introduced by Shamba is that of never carrying a knife when there is no moon; it is forbidden by the tribal law to

do so. This rule was no doubt found necessary to keep down treacherous murders in the darkness, and it has given rise to the habit of wearing a wooden imitation of a knife stuck into the girdle when the moon is not shining, for the youth of the Mushenge would not consider his costume complete without something in his belt. When confronted with a long list of chiefs it is very difficult to fix with any certainty the dates at which any one of them sat upon the throne. It is quite possible, for instance, that two or three kings may, in troublous times, have succeeded one another in the course of a single year. In the case of Shamba, however, Torday was able to fix his date at the commencement of the seventeenth century with certainty, as during the reign of his successor there occurred a total eclipse of the sun, a phenomenon which is duly remembered as an incident in Bushongo history. Shamba's words are still quoted upon many occasions by the people of his tribe, and he appears to have made many trite remarks which have become proverbs. "To every man his wife, to every dog his bone, and you will have peace in the village," is an example of one of these sayings.

At the time of Shamba, Bushongo art had reached a very high standard. The Nyimi one day showed to us the statues of former kings about which Captain Thesiger had spoken, and among which was a portrait of Shamba. This was a wonderful piece of wood-carving, one of the finest examples of Bushongo work that we came across, and it is no exaggeration to say that the figure bears quite a resemblance in the face to the descendant to Shamba who occupies the throne to-day. The statue is in the British

Museum, so is the photograph of the present Nyimi—my readers can observe the likeness for themselves. The purchase of this statue was one of the most difficult things that Torday accomplished during his journey in the Kasai. It not only belonged to the nation, and so was not the personal property of the king, but it was regarded with the greatest reverence by the natives. Some objects are held very sacred by the Bushongo. For example, there exists an ivory trumpet which led to a serious war because a visitor from another village made a scratch upon it with his finger when examining it. The statues, four in number, of the heroes which the Nyimi showed to us were regarded with a respect similar to that accorded to the trumpet. We were, of course, most anxious to secure these wonderful specimens of carving for the National Museum, but at first it seemed highly improbable that we should succeed in doing so. Torday commenced by tactfully sounding the Nyimi as to whether he would be much opposed to the sale of these treasures, and rather to our surprise we learned that he would not. He had fully understood what Torday had told him about the uses of the Museum as a treasure-house for such objects, and he was content that the statues of his ancestors should find a permanent home in it. "I would sell them to you if they were mine," he said, "but if I suggest such a thing to my councillors they will immediately oppose the idea. You must talk to the elders yourself, and tell them that I do not wish to let the statues go; then, in their usual spirit of contrariness, they may desire to sell them." Torday thereupon proceeded to win over the elders. This necessitated a good deal of expenditure of







THE STATUE OF SHAMBA BOLONGONGO  
(NOW IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM).

trade goods in presents to the various dignitaries who would have a voice in the matter of the sale, and occupied a considerable time, for each councillor had to be interviewed separately and in secret when Torday discussed this all-important question. Eventually, owing to Torday's persuasive powers, and to the fact that our interest in their customs had caused the elders to take a liking to us, all the dignitaries concerned agreed to use their influence with the king to induce him to sell us the statues.

At a solemn gathering of the elders the matter was discussed. The Nyimi told us afterwards that he had let it appear that he was not desirous of parting with the treasures, but when the council had urged him to do so in order that all the world might see and marvel at them in the museum he had agreed to let them go too, and the question of price was then raised. The price demanded for the first statue was a very high one, to be paid mainly in a kind of dark red cloth which we could purchase from the Kasai Company, but we could not let such an opportunity go by of securing so important an object, and were, therefore, obliged to pay what was asked. As time went on Torday managed, by the same means, to secure all the four statues that we had seen, three of which are now on view at the museum. They are, I believe, considered by scientists to be some of the most remarkable objects of native manufacture that have been brought out of Central Africa.

It may seem rather like vandalism to deprive the Bushongo people of the statues to which such importance is attached—it seemed so to us at the time—but when one remembers that the respect with which they are regarded

will, as the inevitable change in native customs and beliefs following upon the introduction of European ideas gradually spreads over the dark continent, slowly, perhaps, but surely fade away until the statues, if left at the Mushenge, would have come to be looked upon as valueless, one cannot help thinking that it is better that such objects should be permanently preserved in a place where they are appreciated, and where they run the smallest risk of damage or destruction. If left in the care of the Nyimi such things are constantly exposed to the danger of loss by fire or damage by white ants; in years to come they would very likely have been given away to any casual traveller when the Bushongo had ceased to care about them, and thus perhaps be lost for ever. As it is they are safe; and I do not think that we can reproach ourselves for putting them in a place of safety. We collected in the Mushenge a large number of other objects illustrative of Bushongo art, including some very fine specimens of the velvet-like pile cloth made of raphia fibre and embroidered with many curious patterns, each of which has its meaning and its name.

Among the many pieces of elaborate wood-carving that we purchased were some very curious "divining" instruments, by means of which crimes are brought home to their perpetrators by a fetish-man. These instruments consisted of models of crocodiles, rather conventional in shape, about a foot in length, hewn from solid wood and ornamented with carefully carved patterns upon the sides; the backs of the creatures are flat. The method of using the diviner is as follows:—When a man has lost something which he

thinks may have been stolen, he goes to the fetish-man and, after paying him a fee, for the services of the magician are never given for nothing, requests him to find out the name of the thief. The divining instrument is then produced, and the fetish-man commences to rub its flat back with a small wooden disc, repeating, as he does so, the names of every one who might possibly be the guilty party. When the name of the culprit is mentioned, the disc refuses to be moved along the crocodile's back, thereby indicating the person to whom the poison test is to be applied. If after swallowing the poison the suspect does not die, he is paid heavy damages by the man who has caused him to undergo the ordeal by suggesting his name to the wizard as the possible thief. If he dies—well, he was guilty, and there is one thief less among the Bushongo.

We secured a number of carved pieces of tukula, the meaning of which we were for some time at a loss to understand. We discovered that when a man dies it is usual for his widows to distribute these objects among his relations and intimate friends as souvenirs of the deceased, a custom which resembles very closely the old English habit of giving away mourning rings. The death of a Court dignitary and the investiture of his successor gives occasion for a lot of ceremonial. During our stay at the capital an important functionary, whose duties resemble those of a herald, died, and the king ordered a mourning dance to be held in honour of his memory. This dance, which was not in the least mournful, was similar to the dances so frequently held at the Mushenge, and consisted of a number of gorgeously arrayed elders dancing round in a circle, brandishing their great

ceremonial knives. The body of the dead herald was in the meantime lying in state in a shed specially erected for the purpose in the bush, a hundred yards or so outside the village. It was encased in a coffin made of mats, and was guarded by the dead man's female relatives. Eventually his lying-in-state became almost intolerable to any one living close at hand, for many days elapsed before the corpse was buried, but it gave us an opportunity of observing the funeral rites of the Bushongo.

I have alluded so often to the courtiers of the Nyimi and to his council that I ought to give my readers some idea of the composition of the king's household. The full number of dignitaries amounts to about one hundred and forty, but there is an upper chamber of a very few of the highest dignitaries, such as the prime minister and the commander-in-chief of the warriors. All sorts of officials make up the one hundred and forty. Heralds, military officers, magistrates, representatives of outlying districts, a number of female officials, the man who picks up obstacles in the king's path, the keeper of the records, and representatives of the various arts and crafts of the Bushongo, are but a few of the persons who hold positions at Court. The representatives of the arts and crafts are the heads of bodies closely resembling the Guilds of London. For instance, there exists at the Mushenge the weavers, cordwainers, and fishmongers; carvers, builders, and hunters are also represented, although the Bushongo are by no means famous for their skill in the chase. It is noteworthy that certain positions at Court are held always by slaves. Slaves are, as a rule, well treated by the Bushongo, but are considered very much

lower in the social scale than their aristocratic masters. We were kept very hard at work gleaning information about the matters to which I have briefly alluded in the foregoing pages and in collecting legends and other items of interest to scientists, but our life, although full of interest, was rendered very trying by a foolish mistake about the forwarding of our stores. As I have said, we arrived at the Mushenge with practically nothing in the way of European comestibles, relying upon receiving a depot of "chop-boxes," as one's cases of provisions are termed in the Congo, which should have been waiting for us at Luebo, but the days grew into weeks and the weeks into months before they reached us, having been left at Dima by mistake. The Kasai Company's agent very kindly sent us such things as he could spare, but he himself was living on very short commons, pending the arrival of his own stores, and the missionaries departed very soon after our coming to form a new station near the Kasai Company's new hospital at the mouth of the Lubue River, we were therefore obliged to exist almost entirely upon native fare.

"Palm oil chop," a dish consisting of cassava dough and a chicken cooked in palm oil flavoured with red pepper, is by no means a bad breakfast dish taken occasionally, but to live on the stuff is to learn to dislike it. In addition to this, poultry is very difficult to obtain in the Mushenge, so that we had quite frequently to partake of a meal of the manioc dough without the chicken, washed down with water, for we soon came to an end of our tea and coffee, and we carried no wines with us. It appears that during the rising of 1904, when the Bushongo deserted their villages,

the chickens died in great numbers, and very few have since been reared, accordingly the fowls one can sometimes obtain are very expensive and very skinny. Although we tried to make the best of things, and to keep up appearances by dining off manioc dough at a table faultlessly appointed (I defy any one who is not in the best of health to attack such a meal if it is badly served up), the starvation soon began to tell upon us. When we left the forest we were feeling the strain of our journey in its terrible climate, and we really needed "feeding up," so that we were more affected by the lack of supplies than we should have been earlier in our stay in Africa. Torday suffered more than I did; I escaped with neuralgia and loss of strength; but one night Torday was taken very seriously ill, his heart had begun to feel the strain. With nothing whatever in the way of comforts at hand, I think he is remarkably fortunate to have survived the attack; for a night and a day I feared that he might succumb. I suppose that his will power had a good deal to do with his recovery, which was certainly not due to the nourishment that could be found for him. Our clothes, too, had practically come to an end, for we had intended only to spend six months in the basin of the Sankuru, but our visit had extended to over a year, and what with wear and tear, and having to part with garments in exchange for curios, our wardrobes were reduced to very scanty proportions. I had no boots. The ones I brought up country with me, cracked by constant wettings, followed by exposure to the scorching sun, were quite worn out, I was therefore obliged to wear an old pair of canvas shoes, the rubber soles of which quickly wore into holes, letting my



feet through on to the ground. It is remarkable how one unconsciously avoids treading upon things that will hurt one when walking in the rough grass of the plains or in the woodlands; although I marched a good deal when wearing these old shoes, for I used to go out every day in a usually unsuccessful search for guinea-fowls, and I made a journey of over a fortnight's duration to the north-west of the Mushenge, I do not remember once seriously cutting my feet.

We were unlucky in being at the Mushenge when our stores were delayed, for the local tobacco is scarcely smokable, and we are both of us inveterate smokers. In many places the natives grow tobacco which, dried in the native manner, is really not bad, but the Bushongo cook a green leaf over a fire and tear it up and put it in their pipes; this was the only tobacco we could get to smoke, and as it crumbles when dried into a fine powder, it is almost useless in a pipe, and even when carefully rolled in fragments of the weekly edition of the *Times*, it makes a truly disgusting cigarette. The Bushongo themselves, however, appear to thoroughly enjoy it. Concerning the introduction of smoking among them, the Bushongo have a curious legend. Many years ago one of them returned from a long journey, and he was describing to his compatriots the many strange sights that he had seen, when he produced a pipe and some tobacco and commenced to smoke. His companions were astounded—"Look at the man," they cried, "he is drinking smoke!" The traveller then explained to them wherein the charm of smoking lay, and induced them to try it. When they said that they found it agreeable, he said, "When you have a quarrel with

your brother, in your fury you may wish to slay him ; sit down and smoke a pipe. When the pipe is finished you will think that perhaps death is too great a punishment for your brother's offences, and you will decide to let him off with a thrashing. Relight your pipe and smoke on. As the smoke curls upward you will come to the conclusion that a few hard words might take the place of blows. Light up your pipe once more, and when it is smoked through, you will go to your brother and ask him to forget the past." Living in their very midst, we soon became friendly with all the natives of the Mushenge. For the first week or so of our stay the king used to call upon us and receive our visits, attended by a number of his courtiers, but as he became better acquainted with us, he would visit us unattended, or accompanied only by one or two intimate friends, and would often sit with us until far into the night discussing his kingdom or listening eagerly to everything we told him about Europe. We were astonished to find the ruler of so conservative a people as the Bushongo so progressive in his ideas.

He bitterly regretted the departure of the Roman Catholic missionaries from his village. The priests had received orders to abandon their mission near the Mushenge, and to found a new station at Pangu, near the spot where the waters of the Lubue flow into the Kasai, in order that their medical knowledge might be turned to account in assisting to nurse the sick who would be sent there to a new hospital which the Kasai Company was building. No doubt their work at Pangu has been most useful, and very likely several Europeans by this time owe their lives to

their care, but I cannot help thinking that it is a thousand pities that they ever left the Mushenge. One of the two priests was a man who had spent a dozen years in Africa, and who was a great favourite with the Nyimi; with his experience, and the goodwill of the king, his work among the Bushongo might have been wonderful. It may seem strange to say so, but I do not think a missionary could wish for a better field than that offered by the ultra-conservative Bushongo, so long as the missionary knows their history and their religion thoroughly before he attempts to introduce his own faith among them. It is not my purpose here to describe in detail the religious beliefs of the Bushongo—Torday has dealt at length with them elsewhere; but when I say that they contain one God, the creator, and a set of moral laws of an extraordinarily high character, which take the place among the Bushongo occupied in Christendom by the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, my readers may begin to think that there is quite a possibility that by tactful management a missionary might be able to convert the legends and precepts of the Bushongo into those of Christianity. But such a work requires a thorough knowledge of the local beliefs, a keen insight into the native character, and great tact combined with patience. I have never been a missionary, and therefore cannot pretend to be able to teach others how to carry on their most difficult work, but I do venture to think that more could be accomplished by becoming intimate with the Nyimi and very gradually bringing to his notice, and to the notice of his elders, points of similarity between the Christian religion

and the Bushongo belief, and thus slowly letting the natives regard the former as an amplification of the latter, than by inducing a number of children, too young to have yet learned anything of their tribal religion, to attend Christian services in a mission chapel. The Nyimi is most anxious that all the children of his tribe should learn to read and write, and also that his people should learn such useful crafts as carpentering, &c. For this reason he is anxious that the mission should be re-established near the Mushenge, and the man upon whom the task of re-establishing it devolves will find that the king is predisposed in his favour. When once he has succeeded, by tact and by the example of a strictly fair and honourable life, in winning the affection of the elders and the people, then, I think, he may reasonably hope to be able to slowly introduce his real mission, and to attempt the conversion of the king. But let the missionary understand the native religion as thoroughly as he possibly can before he tries to supplant it with his own, and I am sure that he will find many of the Bushongo beliefs helpful rather than otherwise in his work. If it is the duty of the traveller who, like Torday, goes out to Africa in the interests of ethnographical science to learn what he can of native religions, surely it is the duty of the missionaries to turn the information thus gained to good account.

There is an American Presbyterian Mission at Ibanshe, a few days' journey to the south of the Mushenge, and another at Luebo; the mission at the capital itself was Roman Catholic; Bushongo children have attended both. It seems to me that the very greatest care must be neces-

sary to avoid the work done by these two branches of the Christian religion injuring one another's utility. The native children notice difference in their teaching. I know that from remarks made to me by lads who had received instruction at both, and the youthful Bushongo would very likely not be at all averse to discovering what might appear to them contradictory ideas in their doctrines; this would act as a severe check upon the progress of Christianity in the country. I think that not only might the missionary turn to account the intelligence of the Nyimi, but I believe that a resident advisor could easily guide the king into the path of a very enlightened ruler. I have shown that he is progressive in his ideas, and that his tribal laws are far in advance of any one would expect to in an African tribe; I can also say that in character Kwete is remarkably just. We came across several instances of the fairness with which he presides over trials of his subjects, one of which I may quote here. We were sitting one evening endeavouring to make ourselves believe that we were enjoying a remarkably scanty meal of cassava dough and one skinny chicken about as big as an English wood-pigeon, when we were startled by the shrieks of a woman arising from a hut close at hand. We hurried to the spot, and discovered that a man had been practising the brutal habit (very common in Africa) of putting red pepper into his wife's eyes because she had in some way annoyed him; the pain produced by this diabolical punishment must be terrible. Naturally we were infuriated, and found it very hard to resist the temptation to give the barbarous husband the thrashing he so thoroughly deserved.

Instead of touching the man, however, we decided to take him before his chief. Torday remained to prevent him escaping while I went round to see the Nyimi. I found him at his dwelling, and informing him of what had occurred, I requested him to at once put the scoundrel in chains and keep him there for a good long time. "I will have him put in the guard-room by the gates of my courtyard," replied the chief, "but I cannot put him in chains until I have heard his case in the morning." In my anger I had asked him to condemn a man unheard, and I had been rightly snubbed for it. Next day the man was brought up before the king and a number of the elders, Torday appearing as counsel for the prosecution, and was sentenced to three weeks in chains. "In chains" simply meant the ignominy of having to sleep in the guard-room, and to walk about in the daytime with a rope tied loosely round his neck, so the culprit got off rather more easily than he deserved; but one must remember that an act of cruelty such as he had committed is not looked upon with so much horror by natives as by ourselves, and to judge by the number of women who came to Torday after this incident to beg for a supply of boracic acid wherewith to bathe their own eyes when their husbands administered red pepper to them, such acts must be far from uncommon. A resident advisor could do more to stamp out such practices as this and the trial by poison ordeal by setting the Nyimi against them, than can be effected by any number of decrees forbidding such things issued from Boma or Brussels. Such an official might, I think, do a lot towards restoring and remodelling according to modern ideas the

greatness of the Bushongo nation, which is but a shadow of what it was, say, a hundred years ago. The predecessors of Kwete upon the Bushongo throne were by no means all so enlightened as the great Shamba, or as Kwete himself; numerous cruel tyrants ruled the tribe, men who, in fits of savage passion at some delay in the payment of tribute, have massacred hundreds of their subjects, and who did much to shake the allegiance of many of the remoter districts to the chief.

Now that the white man can prevent the Nyimi from taking summary vengeance on his subjects, even if he desired to do so, some of the sub-tribes of the Bushongo, mindful of the deeds of former days, are by no means so loyal as are the inhabitants of the Mushenge. During our stay at the capital some of the Bangendi, a portion of the tribe living near the Lubudi River, rose against their king. The Nyimi himself set out for the scene of the disturbance, accompanied by a number of his troops (Baluba and Batetela slaves for the most part), who were many of them armed with old muzzle-loading guns. During his absence messengers were constantly arriving at the Mushenge from the scene of the disorder, and reports of severe fighting were quickly circulated. "So-and-so has killed three of the Bangendi with his own hand"—"The king has sent for every man to join him, as the Bangendi are too strong for his force"; such rumours kept the village in a great state of excitement. At last a wounded man was carried home, and we were requested to give him what medical attendance we could. The man had been shot by a gun in the stomach, and after a day or two he succumbed to his

injuries, for which we could do little or nothing except endeavour to keep his strength up by administering to him the last remaining item of our European provisions—namely, a bottle of Bovril. When the Nyimi and his men returned we found out that the whole affair had really been remarkably tame. The man who had died was the only one of the king's followers to be wounded, and the Government troops had appeared upon the scene before serious hostilities could commence; on their arrival the Bangendi had dispersed. I do not know if the insurgents had sustained any losses, but if they did, they could only have been very slight. This affair, insignificant in itself, serves to show that the unity of the Bushongo is not so firm as it was, and with its unity the race has lost much of its former greatness.

We became friendly not only with the Nyimi and the great dignitaries of his Court, but with all classes of natives during our stay at the Mushenge, and particularly with the children; two or three of the king's little sons, all under seven years of age, and some of their playmates became our constant companions. When we got up in the mornings we would find the children waiting outside the tents eager to be allowed to perform some service for us, such as holding a mirror while we shaved. All day long they would sit beside us in the shed in which we worked, or accompany us upon our rambles round the village, and at meal-times they dearly loved to take the place of a "boy" and hand us our food. We used to spend most of our spare time playing with these youngsters, and I remember once, just after the death of the herald alluded to above, I returned from a





CHILDREN AT THE MUSHENGE IMITATING A BEARDED EUROPEAN.



THE NYIMI'S SONS PLAYING WITH OUR FIREARMS.



search after guinea-fowl to find the children playing the parts of dignitaries at a funeral ceremony, in which Torday, reclining in his deck-chair, was acting as the corpse! The children were very good as a rule, and remarkably fair in all their games and disputes. Two of them, by name Mikope and Mingi Bengela, who were bosom friends really, would fight just after we had partaken of our midday meal. These conflicts were often most amusing, the blows delivered (which, by the way, never landed upon the person of the adversary) were so terrific that their impetus frequently caused the champion who dealt them to sprawl upon the ground, and tears of rage would spring into the hero's eyes as, time after time, they beat the air. But should another child attempt to do anything so unfair as to touch either combatant during the fray both Mikope and Mingi Bengela, forgetting their own differences, would turn upon the intruder and belabour him as hard as they could. As soon as one of these fights was over (that is to say, when the combatants were weary or when anything else more exciting attracted their attention) it was forgotten, and the two gladiators became as friendly as before their dispute. During the time that food was very scarce I undertook a trip to the north-west of the Mushenge, towards the confluence of the Kasai and Sankuru, in the hope of being able to shoot some game and send the meat back to Torday, for at this time several European travellers were expected at the capital, including a Belgian journalist, a military officer, and Colonel Chaltin, famous in the Arab wars, who had recently become director of the Kasai Company. I stayed in several small villages in a thickly-wooded country, where

I tried to obtain an elephant. The natives told me that the forest on the left bank of the Sankuru is rapidly spreading southwards towards the Mushenge, and I was shown several places now clothed thickly with young woods which had been open country in the memory even of natives of about twenty-five years of age. Elephants are fairly numerous in this country, but I was never able to obtain one. They pass their time in the low-lying part of the woodlands, which is mostly submerged and in which the undergrowth is so dense as to render a very near approach necessary before even so large a beast as an elephant can be seen, and when one is continually slipping about on roots concealed from view by the water one can scarcely hope to get very near to a beast without attracting his attention. Upon the only occasion when I did really believe that I should succeed in bagging an elephant the native that accompanied me got such a bad attack of nerves that he bolted, making off in one direction while the elephant retired hurriedly in another, and leaving me to follow him as best I could through a forest swamp with darkness rapidly coming on. I had no choice but to follow the man, for the whole country was under water, often as deep as one's waist, and I knew that I should have very little chance of getting out of the woods at all if I allowed my companion to get out of sight or earshot. After several unsuccessful attempts to get an elephant I realised that I was wasting time and sending Torday nothing to eat, so I turned my attention to some buffalo which I heard were to be found in a clearing near a tiny village called Ikwembe. Ikwembe was a miserable place, consisting of only about ten extremely

dilapidated huts, and the natives, who had probably never received a white man to stay in their village before, did not seem particularly pleased to see me. They were not in the least hostile, of course, for they knew that I travelled under the protection of the king, but I received a very poor welcome. Upon my explaining that I wished to shoot a buffalo, the chief, a very old man with a deformed leg, in which the knee would seem to have been dislocated in early youth and never put into place again, with the result that the limb had not grown properly, informed me that a herd of these animals habitually fed close to the village, and that his people would show me where to search for them. Just as the sun was nearing the horizon, and I was endeavouring to secure a guinea-fowl for my supper, a native came hurrying to call me, having seen five buffalo in the clearing. When I returned, bringing with me the head of one of the beasts, I began to be regarded as a welcome guest, for the Bushongo are not keen enough hunters to often succeed in killing buffaloes themselves. At dawn I sent off my six men (all the porters I had, for I was travelling with practically no baggage) to carry the meat to the Mushenge, of course presenting the inhabitants of Ikwembe with their share, and in the evening I again found the buffaloes and bagged another. On my return to Ikwembe the old chief formally requested me never to leave his village! After a few days, however, in the course of which I added nothing but a duiker to my bag, my popularity began to wane. Unfortunately much of the meat that I sent back to Torday was bad before it reached him, for I had had to wander some distance from the capital to find

any game at all. The buffaloes I shot at Ikwembe appear to be "Congo buffaloes," the *bos caffer nanus* of naturalists, and I should think they were larger than the animals whose tracks I had seen in the great forest. The bulls are rather darker in colour than the mounted specimen of a "Congo buffalo" from Nigeria in the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road. Of other game there are very few species, bush-buck and duiker representing the antelope family here as in most of the districts we visited, while the ubiquitous red pig is to be found in the forests. On the whole my shooting trip, though very enjoyable and affording me an opportunity of seeing something of the country and the Bushongo other than the courtiers of the king, was not very profitable as regards the amount of meat sent back to the Mushenge.

In the course of his investigations into the history of the Bushongo, Torday elicited some information which enabled him to form a theory as to the origin of the Bashilele, a people whom I have mentioned in an earlier chapter as attacking the official in charge of Basongo, near the confluence of the Kasai and the Sankuru. From what the Nyimi told him he came to the conclusion that these people and their western neighbours, hitherto known to us as the Tukongo, must be really a branch of the Bushongo stock. Before leaving Europe Torday had conceived a great desire to visit the hitherto unexplored country between Kasai and its tributary the Loange where dwell these two tribes, and now it seemed to him that, in order to complete his study of the Bushongo, it was imperative that we should make a determined effort to get into touch with the peoples



A BUSHONGO VILLAGE NEAR THE MUSIENGE.



MIKOPE AND MINGI BENGELA.





whom he believed to be their kinsmen. We learned that the word "Tukongo," which figures on many maps, is really a misnomer, like the word "Bakuba," and that the natives of the Loange region call themselves Bakongo, by which name in future I shall refer to them. They are not, however, to be confused with the other Bakongo who inhabit the lower Congo near the coast, with whom they are in no way connected.

The Bashilele and Bakongo bore a bad reputation. They had burnt a factory belonging to the Kasai Company on the banks of the Upper Kasai; they had repulsed with considerable losses two military expeditions directed across their country from the East; and in the North they continually snipe at the soldiers and porters whenever the white officer commanding at Basongo endeavours to penetrate inland from the river bank. This much is true: the Bashilele and Bakongo must plead guilty to this; but with these facts to go upon imaginative persons had endowed the tribes with a truly terrible reputation. They were cannibals of the most debased type, treacherous and warlike; their country consisted of dense forest, in which even a strong escort would be at the mercy of the natives. All the white men to whom we had mentioned our desire to visit the country between the Loange and the Kasai had been fully convinced that if we once succeeded in entering the unknown tract we should never be seen again; but the king of the Bushongo, whose opinion we regarded as of more value than those of Europeans, considered it quite possible that if once we could establish friendly relations with outlying villages of either the Bakongo or Bashilele tribes, we might

reasonably hope to be able to cross their territory. Torday therefore decided to proceed to the Kwilu River, where he had previously carried on a great deal of research work among the natives, and to attempt to march overland from the Kwilu River to the Upper Kasai, thereby connecting the work he had done on the Kwilu with that which he had now accomplished in the region of the Sankuru. It was, therefore, with this somewhat ambitious plan in our mind that we left the Mushenge at Christmas 1908, after nearly four months of interesting work at the court of the Nyimi, and returning to the Sankuru at Bolombo, descended the river by steamer to the Kasai Company's headquarters at Dima.

## CHAPTER VII

### UP THE KWILU RIVER

A STAY of about ten days in Dima, coupled with the luxury of regular meals and a plentiful supply of fresh vegetables, soon put us upon the highroad to recovery from the feeling of lassitude naturally resulting from the period of semi-starvation through which we had passed at the Mushenge, and the return to strength, together with the knowledge that we were about to embark upon an interesting and possibly exciting journey, soon filled us with eagerness to be up and doing. We accordingly hurried forward the packing and despatch of a goodly number of cases for the British Museum, and rearranged the provisions which had been waiting for us in Dima, and were still in perfect condition, ready for a start to the Kwilu. This time we included in our baggage a box of toys which had recently arrived from Europe. Among these were "Zulu" dolls with movable arms and legs, golliwog dolls, china animals, and last, but not least, two clockwork elephants which would walk and move their trunks; one of these two latter was destined to play an important part in our passage from the Kwilu to the Kasai. Dima itself, as I have already mentioned, had considerably improved since our arrival in November 1907. The Government had recently come to the conclusion that the place was sufficiently important to render the establish-

ment of a post-office desirable, and the official in charge of it, a native of Lagos, arrived during our stay there. This was of considerable convenience to us, as we were able, with some frequency, to replenish our stock of stamps and also to despatch registered letters, containing the ethnographical information collected, far more easily than was the case when we had to send all such to Leopoldville for registration. During this visit to Dima we saw a great deal of Colonel Chaltin, who showed us great hospitality. With his wide experience of life in almost every part of the Congo State, he had naturally much information to impart concerning the opening up of many districts, of the earlier days of the State, and particularly of the Arab wars, in which he had served with much distinction, and in which he had been seriously wounded. The Colonel, however, was by no means ready to tell stories of the past or to relate his own experiences upon his expedition to the Nile at the time of the Mahdist rising, when directly asked to do so; often, however, the mention of some place or of some man's name would recall old memories to him and lead him to recount some of his adventures. He has a splendid way of telling his stories, simply yet clearly, and with so much feeling that one can almost imagine oneself taking part in the stirring incidents which he describes. It is far from my purpose to relate any of his stories here; we suggested to him that he should some day publish an account of what he has done and seen. Should he not do so the history of the advance of European influence in Central Africa will lose a most important chapter, for few men have travelled so widely in the Congo as Colonel Chaltin, and very few men are now

living who have personally known, as he has, so many of the early pioneers. Having been quartered upon the Nile, the Colonel has met many British officers, travellers, and officials, of whose exploits he has much to tell, and among whom he has many friends. The men who served in the Congo in the early nineties have many of them succumbed to the climatic conditions and the privations which their work entailed; in fact, when, in recalling his adventures in the past, the Colonel mentioned names of Europeans quite eight times out of ten, he would remark parenthetically, "he is dead now." In the old days the death-rate among the Europeans must have been far greater than it is now, for they had none of the advantages of regular steamship service nor the many little luxuries and conveniences in the way of stores and equipment which now render the life of an African traveller a comparatively easy one. One important point I noticed when Colonel Chaltin was relating his experiences, upon almost every occasion, and they were many, when he mentioned a deed performed by some native soldier, he gave not only the rank, but also the name and tribe of the man; it seems to me that to be served well by African natives, were one to be an officer in command of troops or merely a traveller, it is essential that one should personally know and be known by one's men. The importance of this is, I have thought, often overlooked.

Our plans for the remainder of our journey now began to take a definite shape. Before recommencing our ethnographical work we decided to take a three weeks' rest cure in the form of shooting on the lower Kwilu; after this we should ascend that river as far as Kikwit. At Dima we met

an agent of the Kasai Company named M. Gentil, who had recently founded a factory called Kandale upon the upper Kwilu, about six days south-east of Kikwit. He had travelled a good distance to the south of his post, and had produced some excellent plane-table maps of his region. In the course of his wanderings in the south he had come into contact with a number of Badjok traders from near the Angola frontier with whom he had established most friendly relations. Some of these people had informed him that they were in the habit of proceeding to the upper Kasai to Mai Monene, and also further north in the direction of Bena Makima and Luebo, the point at which we hoped to end our overland journey; and he was of the opinion that should we succeed in meeting with a party of these people travelling eastwards we should have little difficulty in persuading them to take us across the country of the Bakongo and Bashilele; and as he knew it always suited the purpose of the Badjok to remain on friendly terms with the tribes whose country they passed through, he considered that there would be little risk in such an undertaking. He assured us that he had found the natives around Kandale quite peaceful, and that he had much enjoyed his life among them. The country, he said, was healthy, consisting of great open plains, and he had no difficulty at all in supplying his factory with food. In short, he believed that we should reach the Kasai with few difficulties, and little if any danger.

These opinions, however, were not shared by one or two men of considerable experience; they asserted that it would be madness to attempt the passage of the unknown country between the Loange and the Kasai without an

armed escort consisting of natives well used to the service of the white man, and a very considerable number of porters to be recruited preferably from among the people from the upper Kasai or Sankuru. Such men, they said, could easily be found, many of them would be accustomed to the use of muzzle-loading guns, and therefore would be able to handle our Albini rifles, in case of attack, more effectually than the primitive people of the Kwilu; and finally, as they would be working at a great distance from their homes, they would be unlikely to desert for fear of the surrounding tribes with whom they would have nothing in common. The men who put forward these arguments had some of them resided upon the upper Kasai in the country of the warlike Zappo Zap or of the Bena Lulua, who though under-sized, weakly-looking people, are noted for their courage. Good men selected from one of these two tribes might very likely have formed a useful escort in the event of any hostilities, but it is more than probable that their domineering ways would have caused us considerable difficulty when travelling among the people of the Kwilu; and of course it was most important for us to gain the friendship of the local natives wherever we went. Besides this, it would have been impossible to get such picked men together, and had we decided to take with us an escort and porters of the people of the Kasai, we should have had to be content with the sweepings of the Baluba workmen whose demerits I have discussed before.

Torday, from his previous wanderings among them, knew well the people of Kwilu; he liked them, and, which is more important, those he had met liked him. He was,

therefore, sure of being able to get as many men as he wanted from villages which he had previously known. In reply to the statement that the Kwilu country was dangerous, more white men having been killed there than in any other part of the Kasai district, he pointed out that as often as not the cause of the trouble had been the white man's Baluba followers, and that in such fighting as had occurred in the Kwilu the Baluba had almost invariably run away, leaving their master to be defended by the local natives. In one instance a factory had been attacked and the Baluba had bolted, when a number of local Bayanzi workmen employed in the post had repulsed the attack, armed with nothing but their machettes or long knives. No one, I think, casts a slur upon the courage of the natives of the Kwilu. In addition to being brave, Torday knew them to be just as quiet and friendly when staying in the villages of another tribe as the Baluba are domineering and offensive, therefore he decided to be accompanied only by natives of the Kwilu. We did not succeed, at this time, in convincing the supporters of the Baluba. "You will never get across without an escort from the Kasai," they said. "We shall certainly have trouble if we take any Baluba," was the reply. Another of our plans was regarded as foolish in the extreme by the pessimists. Our ten Albinis rifles, which up to this moment had remained in the packing in which they had come from Europe, and which had never accompanied us upon our journeys, were packed with the ninety rounds of ammunition, which was all we had, in two stout wooden cases, each forming a load for two men. It was considered that the weapons would not



be sufficiently get-at-able in case of need, but we were convinced that the need for them would be far less likely to arise if the natives did not know that we were travelling through their country more or less equipped for war, and until almost the end of our journey even our own men, who daily carried the boxes, had no idea what they contained. The plans we ultimately formed for our journey were briefly as follows: We were to ascend the Kwilu River as far as a village named M'Bei on the right bank, not far from the spot where the Inzia flows into the Kwilu; from here we were to proceed up the Kwilu to Kikwit, leaving a message at the Kasai Company's factory of Luano (about half-way to Kikwit) that Torday would be requiring a few men to accompany him upon our journey. Torday knew well the natives in the vicinity of Luano, and he was convinced that should they become aware that we were waiting at Kikwit for porters, a large number of them (many more than we should require) would immediately volunteer for service, and go up to Kikwit to join us next time the Company's steamer passed.

At Kikwit Torday would be able to renew his acquaintance with the southern Bambala people, among whom he had previously spent a considerable time, and, as soon as the men from Luano joined us, we were to go on to the factory of Athenes to the south-south-east, near the head waters of the Kancha River. In the country round Athenes we should have an opportunity of studying the Babunda tribe and the neighbouring Bapinji, and we might get some information about the Hungarian explorer, Magyar, who lost his life about fifty years ago in the country of the

Babunda, and possibly recover some of his records. From Athenes we were to proceed either to Kandale, as had been suggested by M. Gentil, or to the factory of Dumba upon the Lubue River, from either of which places we could commence our final journey towards the Kasai. With this end in view we sent on a good supply of provisions to Dumba, where we could pick them up, or whence they could readily be sent to Kandale. The number of permanent porters who were to be recruited at Luano was not to exceed twenty-five. Considering that we had a large number of provisions and a good deal of impedimenta in the way of camp equipment, trade goods, &c., to carry with us, this number may seem ridiculously small, but as we knew we were attempting to enter a country of very suspicious and probably hostile people, we knew that it would be useless to try to penetrate that country with a large following of men, as any such attempt would only be regarded by the natives as a warlike invasion of their territory; therefore we decided to take just sufficient men to carry the bare necessities of life in case we were forced to retreat hurriedly from the country, and to rely entirely upon establishing such friendly relations with the natives as to enable us to obtain local porters to carry us from village to village. Of personal servants we had but two, our cook Luchima, who was at this time in a very poor state of health, and my boy Sam. Among the Bambala people we intended to obtain another boy or two, of whom or of whose parents Torday had known something in the past.

We were to start from Dima on the 24th January on

board the Company's steamer *St. Antoine*, and had slept the night of the 23rd on board. On the afternoon of the 23rd, however, a Government steamer descending the Kasai had landed a passenger suffering from a bad attack of black-water fever, to be looked after by the Company's doctor resident at Dima. In the night he died, and early next morning the *St. Antoine* was sent to fetch the Jesuit missionary from Wombali to perform the burial service. The funeral took place at two o'clock in the afternoon; the coffin, carried by a number of retired soldiers now working at Dima and preceded by a bugler, was borne to the little cemetery just outside the post. The priest was accompanied by diminutive black acolytes clothed in red, their ebony faces gleaming as the result of an unwonted application of soap. The service was short, and at the conclusion of it Colonel Chaltin, who acted as chief mourner, made a brief speech. The unfortunate officer had been landed at Dima in an absolutely hopeless condition, and had died without any one he knew beside him. Next morning, however, when viewing the body, one of the Company's agents resident in Dima recognised the face of a schoolfellow. As soon as possible after the ceremony we boarded the steamer, accompanied by the priest, and started off for Wombali. At its mouth, where it is some five hundred yards wide, the Kwango flows through low lying country, its right bank bordered by papyrus swamps and marshes which stretch away eastwards to the forest. The left bank is slightly less swampy than the right, and upon this shore, some two miles from the mouth, is situated the Jesuit mission of Wombali. As it was already late the steamer was

to stop for the night at the mission, and the priest in charge, Father Van Tilborg, asked the captain and ourselves to dine with him on shore. As soon as the ship was made fast Torday and I went ashore with the priest, taking with us our shot guns in the hope of coming across some duck, which are numerous in the neighbourhood. Accompanied by one of the lay brothers, a farmer who superintended the plantations at Wombali and instructed the natives of the mission in agriculture, we proceeded about a mile inland to some damp low-lying fields whither the duck return every evening from the sandbanks of the river. We saw a fair number of ducks, but they, perceiving us, did not give us a chance to shoot, and having secured a francolin or two we returned to the mission just as the sun was setting. The house in which the missionaries lived at the time of our visit was an old one made of plaster, but a new house of brick was in course of construction under the guidance of the other lay brother, who had been educated as a builder. A neat brick chapel has already been erected. As the native population of Wombali is by no means dense, the missionaries have extended the field of their labours some distance up the Kwilu and Inzia rivers, at various places on the shores of which they have established *fermes chapelles*, each one looked after by a Christian native who has been educated by the Jesuit missionaries. In these *fermes chapelles* the younger children receive their earliest instructions at the hands of the catechist, and when they have learnt as much as he can teach them they are passed on to Wombali to complete their education. The missionaries possess a small steamer, by means of which Father Van Tilborg and his two

subordinates frequently visit these detached posts. The whole of the Jesuit missionary enterprise in this region is, I understand, under the control of the Jesuit headquarters of Kisantu, on the railway between Stanley Pool and the coast. After an excellent dinner the conversation turned upon our proposed shooting trip, and after admiring one or two fine buffalo skulls hanging up on the verandah, we asked the missionaries for any information they could give us with regard to the haunts of the buffalo, elephants, and other animals that we should be likely to meet with. Upon hearing that we intended to stay at M'Bei, the farmer informed us that he had heard that game was plentiful there, but that he knew from personal experience that buffalo were to be met with in large numbers near the *ferme chapelle* of Pana, some few miles higher up the Kwilu; here, too, he informed us, elephants are frequently to be seen, and such small antelopes as exist in this part of Africa are also to be found in fair numbers. Father Von Tilborg kindly asked us to make what use we liked of the *ferme chapelle*, and to request the catechist and the children there to show us the haunts of the game, which he was confident they would be well able to do. We determined, therefore, to stop at M'Bei on the morrow and try our luck, and to proceed to Pana by the next steamer should we not be enjoying sufficient sport at M'Bei.

The Kwango, up to the point where it is joined by its tributary the Kwilu, maintains a width of about six hundred yards, flowing through level plains, often swampy in the immediate vicinity of the river. The trade upon the Kwango River itself, which does not fall within the

concession of the Kasai Company, is carried on by the Credit Commercial Company, which has one factory on the right bank but a short distance above Wombali. Up to its confluence with the Inzia the Kwilu is but little narrower than the Kwango. It flows through a country consisting of great grassy plains, interspersed with a fair amount of woodland, very much resembling, in the distance, a view over an English woodland country, the woods in no case being sufficiently continuous to be dignified with the name of forest. For many miles up the river from its mouth the banks are not even fringed with trees, and higher up still, even near to its tributary the Kwengo, frequent gaps in the narrow forest belt enable one to see from the deck of a steamer the real open nature of the country. A recent traveller has described the basin of the Kwilu as one great virgin forest. A greater mistake could not possibly be made. In no case does the forest belt exceed a width of about twenty-five miles, and it is rarely more than a mile or two from the water's edge to the plains. In many maps this river is marked "Kwilu," or "Djuma"; but although Torday during his previous journeys in this district has constantly inquired of the natives what they call the river, and during our sojourn there we many times repeated the question, no native with whom we came into contact had ever heard of the second name. Many people, however, called it "Kilu."

We left Wombali early in the morning, and turning up the mouth of the Kwilu we proceeded on our way to M'Bei. There are a considerable number of sandbanks, with their usual complement of crocodiles and aquatic

birds, and wooded islands in this part of the river, and in the stiller water among these small herds of hippopotami were to be seen lying almost submerged, waiting till the cool of the evening should tempt them to their feeding grounds upon the banks. Although we rarely saw a village there were plenty of signs of human life, groups of canoes moored by the bank, fish traps and spear traps for hippopotami were numerous, and here and there small quantities of wood chopped up into lengths suitable for burning on the steamer stood in conspicuous places where they would catch the captain's eye. As a rule there would be no natives watching over these; the people in this part of the world are quite content to cut wood and leave it there for the captain of the passing steamer to take, trusting him to leave the payment for it upon the spot. In this way the Kwilu steamers have often habitually taken fuel at certain spots without ever seeing the people who supply it. The captains, of course, must have been scrupulously honest in paying for what they took or the natives would discontinue the supply. As a rule, wood is obtained at the *fermes chapelle* of the Jesuit mission. I believe that the Company has made an agreement with the missionaries to take their wood in preference to any other, for the priests realise that the children in their outposts have very little to do to keep their plantations in order, and are accordingly glad for them to have the occupation of felling and chopping up the wood.

Our captain did not know exactly where the village of M'Bei was situated, but one of the helmsmen, who was a native of the country, undertook to find the spot. On

our arrival, however, we found that the right bank of the river, upon which the village was situated, was unapproachable owing to the shallow water; we therefore took the advice given us at Wombali and continued our journey, stopping next day at Pana. We passed the night alongside a low-lying plain on the right bank, in the midst of which was situated a small village of the Bayanzi; this we visited, and made inquiries as to the game in the country. Buffalo, we were told, were very numerous here, and elephants frequently visited the plain in which the village stood; indeed, we ourselves saw their tracks. The natives here were confident that we could not do better than proceed to Pana, where they said we should find abundance of game. The following afternoon we passed the mouth of the Inzia. Upon this river are situated several factories belonging to the Kasai Company, and a good deal of rubber and ivory is exported from it. Although the stream is narrow, only some one hundred and fifty yards wide at the mouth, there is at all times of the year a sufficient depth of water to admit of the passage of a small steamer. The banks of the Kwilu just above the Inzia rise abruptly from the water to a height of some fifty feet, and a few miles above the confluence, on the right shore of the Kwilu, stands the Government post of Pana. Until quite recently no troops had been stationed in this district, but several of its agents having been murdered, the Kasai Company prevailed upon the Government to establish a garrison there, paying, I understand, a large amount yearly for this protection, which one would have thought it was the duty of the



Government to supply, especially when one considers the vast amount paid annually by the Company in taxes, export duties, &c. At the time we passed both the commandant in command of the station and his subordinate, a white N.C.O., were absent upon a long journey to the south, so we did not go ashore, but continued our journey for about a mile to the *ferme chapelle* of Pana, which lies on the opposite shore. The place consists of a group of plaster huts forming three sides of a square situated upon the bank, which here rises to a height of some twenty-five feet above the water. At the sound of the steamer's whistle all the inhabitants, from the catechist and his wife down to the youngest child, aged probably about three, hurried down to the water's edge. Visitors are rare at Pana; in fact, I very much doubt if any one except the missionaries have ever slept there before: accordingly the removal of our belongings from the steamer occasioned no little excitement among the children. The catechist hastened forward to greet us; he was attired in a pair of white duck trousers, a frock coat, and a grey felt hat; he was polite, rather too polite, and, although his appearance suggested the utmost respectability, we did not anticipate that we should obtain much sport through any assistance of his. He had a smugness of manner which led us to imagine at once that here was one of those natives who, in becoming a Christian, had forgotten that he was primarily a man, and we felt that this was the last person in the world with whom one could wish to hunt dangerous game. Subsequent events, however, proved to us how false the hastily-formed opinion was.

The *ferme chapelle* at Pana consists of a plaster building used both as a schoolroom and a chapel, and, with one or two small huts, forms one side of the post. Opposite to this is situated the house of the catechist, while between the two, lying some fifty yards back from the bank, is a row of huts inhabited by the children resident at the mission; there are one or two other houses for the children lying just outside the three sides of a rectangle thus formed. The catechist, who rejoices in the name of Louis, and his wife Marie are in command of the post, sharing the labours of teaching, and superintending the cultivation of crops and instructing the very small children, some of whom cannot exceed three years of age, in the rudiments of cooking and other household duties. There are not many children actually resident in the mission—at the outside they cannot exceed twenty—but there are a fair number of Bayanzi villages scattered about in the neighbourhood, from which the children arrive early in the morning, returning home at sunset. Short services are held two or three times a day, the congregation being summoned by the beating of an old tin, for the *ferme chapelle* of Pana cannot yet boast of a bell. After the early morning service the children receive instruction in the principles of the Roman Catholic faith, while a few of the elder ones, who have commenced learning to read and write, spend some time sitting about with pencil and paper copying down the alphabet and short sentences from a very elementary “reader,” their work being overlooked by Louis when his class teaching is at an end. In the afternoon all the children work in the fields, or, if a steamer is expected,



A CHILD FROM THE MISSION AT PANA.



BOS CAFFER SIMPSONI; A COW.



fell and cut up timber ready for fuel. Louis appeared to us to fulfil his task remarkably well. I do not know exactly what his qualifications as a teacher were, but he certainly kept his post neat and tidy and maintained perfect order amongst his pupils, to whom I think he was greatly attached, and who certainly seemed devoted to him.

We had brought with us from Dima a native, who had been employed there as a buffalo hunter, to act as tracker and gun-bearer. With this man, and a child or two from the mission, I went out on the evening of our arrival to have a look round for tracks of buffalo, which were said to come close up to the post after nightfall, and, sure enough, within five hundred yards of the houses we came upon the spoor of a herd of some half-dozen of these beasts which clearly showed that they had been feeding upon the borders of the plantation. Indeed, Louis had found it necessary to have a rough fence erected beside his fields to keep the animals out. Next morning, accompanied by the tracker and two boys of about twelve and fourteen years of age, I attempted to work up to this herd as they wallowed in the forest swamp close by the river bank, half a mile or so below the post. The amount of water in the swamp, and frequent slipping about upon submerged sticks as we followed the path by which the buffaloes had gone, caused us to make so much noise as to disturb the animals before I could get a shot, and I returned to Pana unsuccessful. One thing, however, about this preliminary effort was satisfactory. I had found out that, although the tracker from Dima was undoubtedly good at his job, the two mission children were in no way

his inferiors at finding out and following up tracks, and that, despite their youth, they had not the slightest hesitation in entering the thick cover where the beasts were known to be, in addition to which, of course, they possessed an excellent knowledge of the country round, and were evidently as keen as I was upon the business. When I returned I found that Louis had suggested to Torday that that evening we might try for a shot near the post by moonlight, for the moon was now full. This we decided to do, and one or two children were posted in the plantations to listen for the approach of the beasts. Just as we had finished dinner, the catechist came to say that the animals had been heard. When we turned to look at him our surprise was great. The white trousers, frock coat and grey felt hat had disappeared; the smug schoolmaster, to whom we had taken an instinctive dislike on the previous day, was transformed into a native hunter, who, clad only in a very scanty loin cloth and grasping a light spear, was eagerly beckoning us to follow him. We started off at once, but although we were able to get quite close to the animals we could never see them. The catechist proved himself to be an excellent stalker, as were also the one or two children who accompanied him. We learned subsequently that this man would frequently chase the buffaloes out of the plantations at night, and that on one occasion during the dry season when some elephants had threatened his crops he and a few of his elder pupils had succeeded in driving them away. On one or two occasions he accompanied us to look for buffalo by night, and I am sure that he would have taken part in our shooting expedi-



AN INCIDENT AT PANA





tions by daylight to the detriment of his children's studies, had he not been laid up with a bad attack of fever during the greater part of our stay at Pana. These evenings spent with him in the bush completely altered the opinion we had at first formed of the man. We never succeeded in obtaining a beast from the herd which fed so close to the mission; the passage of the children to and from the villages at sunrise and sunset prevented their leaving the forest during the hours of daylight, but with the buffaloes further to the west we were more fortunate.

The country between the Kwilu and the Inzia at this point consists of gently undulating grassy plains, entirely devoid of bushes, in which are situated many pools and swamps where buffalo drink and linger long after sunrise to crop the sweet grass. There is also a good deal of woodland such as I have described before, consisting rather of small dense covers than of continuous forest, parts of which are usually swampy, and here the beasts wallow in the shade during the fierce midday heat. The soil of the plains is sandy and the grass is rarely very thick, resembling a thin English crop of hay about five feet high. We usually had to go some distance towards the Inzia before we found our buffalo, the likely spots being shown to us by children from the mission. There is another *ferme chapelle* on the Inzia, about five hours' march from Pana, and as the children from Pana frequently visit it, they had often seen buffalo on the way and were consequently able to take us to their favourite feeding grounds. I do not think that we ever went out with these children without finding a beast of some sort. We saw buffaloes in herds

numbering from three to fifteen heads, and have counted as many as twenty-seven in one day. To find them, however, one must leave Pana long before daylight, or the increasing heat of the sun will have driven them into the forest swamps before one reaches the pastures. I think that the buffalo in this part of the world are larger than those I had come into contact with near the Mushenge and those whose tracks I saw in the equatorial forest. They also seem to me to be considerably darker than those around the Mushenge. This applies not only to the aged bulls, some of which are almost black, but also to the adult cows, which are of a dark chocolate-brown colour all over. Quite half the animals in any given herd on the Kwilu would be as dark or darker than the bull I have seen east of the Kasai. The horns, too, of both bulls and cows appear to be larger, as a rule, than the specimens I had previously seen. We secured some really fine specimens of both male and female of the buffaloes around Pana, and Mr. Lyddekker, to whom we submitted them, has found that they represent a species of small buffalo hitherto unknown to science, which he has described under the name of *bos caffer simpsoni*. A mounted head of a female, the sex which displays the most marked difference in colouring from the buffaloes around the Mushenge, is now exhibited in the Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road. As I have already remarked in Chapter V., I cannot help thinking that there must at least be three species of buffalo in the parts of the Kasai district we visited: the buffalo of the Kwilu, that of the Mushenge, and the small animals of the southern portion of the equatorial forest. Whether or not



BOS CAFFER SIMPSONI; OUR BEST BULL.



the buffaloes I shot during my trip from the Mushenge are really of the *bos caffer nanus* variety I am not in a position to state, for their head skins were unfortunately spoilt by the climate, but I know that the males of that district are darker in colour than the mounted specimen of *nanus* from Nigeria exhibited in the Natural History Museum, whereas the females appear to be of about the same colour but rather larger than the female there shown. Possibly, therefore, the buffaloes from the country around the Mushenge may constitute a different species, as may those of the great forest. I have no right to advance any theory with regard to these latter for, as I have said, I never set eyes on one of them; but to judge by their tracks they appear to be smaller than either of the buffaloes I shot. I was told by a Belgian gentleman who has done a good deal of shooting that two kinds of buffalo exist near Kanda-Kanda, where, I suppose, the dwarf buffalo may be merging into the well-known "Cape" species, but I saw no horns from this part of Africa. Although the buffalo from the Kwilu lacks the enormous strength of his cousin the Cape buffalo, he is nevertheless very tenacious of life, and when wounded is capable of making a most vicious and determined charge. Although I used a powerful rifle I, on one occasion, only just managed to stop the rush of an animal which had previously received two bullets so placed that the wounds that they inflicted must have proved fatal in a few moments. Torday also had an experience with one which might have ended in an accident. We had been trying to secure a couple of animals for the steamer, which was expected that evening, to carry on to Dima. We came across a herd, and

singling out the biggest beast I fired at him with my Express; on being struck, the animal turned off into a very small but dense cover, the rest of the herd making off across the plain. When we reached the edge of the little wood in which the wounded animal was, we could hear the beast giving vent to those moaning sounds which a buffalo frequently makes when at the point of death, and which, I think, must always make the sportsman half regret that he had not stayed his hand. Concluding that it would be only a few minutes before the end came, Torday whispered to me to hurry on after the herd with one child from the mission in the hope of securing a second beast, while he waited with another child until the animal was dead. Accordingly I followed the animals across the plain, but being unable to come up with them I returned to Torday, who had waited outside the wood until the moaning had ceased, and then, concluding that the animal was dead, he had gone round to the other side of the cover to take a look at it. He was armed with his 256 Mannlicher, for which he had but two cartridges left. Now if one attempts to load a Mannlicher with a clip containing but two cartridges there is often a chance that the action of the rifle will jam after the first shot has been fired when endeavouring to insert the second cartridge into the chamber, therefore Torday loaded one cartridge by hand and gave the second one to the small boy who accompanied him, telling him to follow closely on his heels, and thrust the cartridge into his hand should he have to fire a shot and reach back for it. All was silent as he entered the wood. Going on a few yards he made out the form of the buffalo lying



CUTTING UP A BUFFALO AT PANA.



A HIPPOPOTAMUS FROM THE KWILU.





down; he was not sure if it was dead, so he fired at it in the hope of finishing it off; on being struck the animal slowly rose to its feet and turned to face him. It was but a very few yards distant; Torday put his hand back for the spare cartridge, and the little Bayanzi handed it to him as coolly as if there were no dangerous beasts within twenty miles of him. With this shot Torday finished off the buffalo. This is but one example out of many that came to our notice of the great courage and coolness which the mission children displayed in hunting the buffalo with us. If it requires nerve to follow the wounded animals into the dense forest when armed with a good rifle, I always think that it must require at least twice as much to go in armed with nothing at all, relying solely on another man's accuracy of aim. I will not weary the reader with the details of our daily hunting experiences; suffice it to say that we kept ourselves and the mission children supplied with fresh meat, and secured some excellent heads of buffalo. We were also able to add duiker and a reed buck (which are by no means common here) to our bag, while in the evenings, if we cared to take a stroll for an hour or so round the post, we could provide for our supper with francolins or guinea-fowls. We were at Pana during the rainy season, and, as at this time there is a great deal of water in the woods inland, elephants do not, as a rule, find it necessary to come down to the Kwilu to drink; in the dry season, however, when their favourite swamps have dried up, the animals are often to be seen quite close to the *ferme chapelle*. We stayed nearly three weeks at Pana, spending the whole of our time in hunting, and then prepared to

go on up river when the steamer should pass our camp on its way to Kikwit.

Upon the arrival of the *St. Antoine* we left the little mission after spending there perhaps the pleasantest time we enjoyed during the whole of our journey, and proceeded up the Kwilu to Luano, among the natives from which neighbourhood Torday intended to recruit our porters. The northern Bambala from the country around Luano are born farmers, and it is mainly from their extensive plantations that the large quantity of food-stuffs required at Dima is brought down the river every ten days on board the *St. Antoine*. They are cannibals, but unlike the fierce and treacherous Bankutu of the great forest, whose terrible man-eating propensities I have already described, they only partake of human flesh at rare intervals upon the occasion of some ceremony, and they never deliberately hunt men to serve as food. As my narrative of our wanderings in the unknown country will show, these Bambala are as quiet and peaceable a people as one could wish for to accompany one upon a journey in the course of which it is absolutely necessary to maintain friendly relations with the natives through whose villages one passes. A youth came up to Torday as soon as we landed at Luano and inquired if it was true that he was undertaking a journey and would be requiring porters, and upon Torday replying in the affirmative he at once announced his intention of accompanying us. Torday refused his services, for he considered that the lad was not sufficiently strong for the work which lay before us, and we saw no more of him that evening. Next morn-

ing, however, after our steamer had started we found him seated with the crew, having firmly determined to accompany us whether we liked it or not. After this we could not very well send him back, so we enlisted this lad, Moamba, as a member of our expedition. We had left a message for the people around Luano that we should require about twenty men to accompany us, and we had requested the Kasai Company's agent to tell any one who should volunteer for such service that they might come on by the next steamer and join us at Kikwit, where we intended staying a few days amongst their kinsmen the southern Bambala. Upon the third day after leaving Luano we arrived at Kikwit; and here I was immediately struck by the personal appearance of the natives, who are quite unlike any I have previously seen. They cover themselves—hair, body and loin-cloth,—with a reddish-coloured clay which, although it may seem disgusting to European ideas of cleanliness, is so neatly and so regularly applied that one soon ceases to regard the custom as dirty. They are particularly careful about the dressing of their hair, which is rolled up into plaits caked with clay running backwards from the forehead, in which they often fix little brass-headed nails purchased from the white man. These plaits hang like tails behind the neck, and it is by no means uncommon to see a man wearing a skewer in one of them, so that it sticks out behind him at right angles to his neck. These southern Bambala are extraordinarily vain people, and upon several occasions Torday has had two of them come to him to settle a dispute as to which of them was the better looking, a

rather difficult question to decide, for, had he shown any preference, the man whose appearance had been thus insulted would have been mortally offended.

We did not do any serious ethnographical work among the Bambala, for Torday had already made a detailed study of their manners and customs, but we paid several visits to their beautiful villages, with their rectangular grass-built huts dotted about under the shade of the palm-trees, and I had ample opportunity of making the acquaintance of many natives who came in to Kikwit to see Torday, who during his previous stay in the country had evidently made himself extremely popular. Literally hundreds of men turned up to talk to him, and I am in no way exaggerating when I say that two or three whole villages offered to escort us to the Kasai. This struck Torday as rather remarkable, for the Bambala had always been averse to travelling, and it is perhaps a sign that the arrival of the European has given the natives a desire to see more of the world than they cared to do when in a more primitive state.

The Bambala are really good singers, and it is very striking to hear a number of them singing, in harmony, a chant composed in honour of the white man to whom it is sung. Whenever a party of porters arrives to carry loads they always sing in this way, and their well-groomed persons, their smiling countenances and their songs combine to make one think that the Bambala must be a singularly happy and contented race. There are two rather curious musical instruments in use among these people. One is a nose flute. Ordinary wooden flutes





A BAMBALA BOY WITH AN ORDINARY FLUTE.



A BAMBALA GIRL PLAYING A NOSE FLUTE.

played with the mouth are used by the boys, but the girls perform upon a flute which is played by the nose. Needless to say this latter flute does not produce much melody. The other curious instrument, and one which is found among several of the peoples visited, is the friction drum. This consists of a cylinder of wood covered at one end with leather; through this leather is passed a stick running through the wooden cylinder, so fastened that it can be moved an inch or two, to and fro through the leather. Having heated the membrane of the drum to draw it tight, the stick is vigorously rubbed with wet leaves and it produces a weird growling noise which can be heard at a great distance, and which has earned for the friction drum among some tribes the title of the "village leopard." Torday has placed specimens of this instrument, collected in various localities, and also of the nose flute in the British Museum.

Like their cousins from Luano the Bambala around Kikwit are very peaceable and are chivalrous even in their methods of war. They have a curious habit of holding a sort of tournament, a different affair to serious warfare. Should two villages have a dispute a day and place is appointed for a battle. The bush is cleared to give a fair and open field, and the warriors of each side turn out to settle the matter in the lists. Torday has witnessed some of these encounters. The proceedings commence with a good deal of bombastic speech, and the champions of either village hurl insults at the heads of their opponents. "Ah, you, there, with the ugly face, I'll give you something in a minute," and other similar remarks

are bandied about. Then the arrows begin to fly (at very long ranges) and the battle is in full swing. Very little damage is done in these encounters. Occasionally one or more of the warriors receive scratches, but it is very rare for any one to be seriously hurt, and at the conclusion of the engagement, that is to say when the combatants are weary, there is no ill-feeling between the opposing sides. If a man should happen to be killed the affair becomes much more serious and will perhaps develop into a serious war, in which the conflicting armies will attack one another whenever they meet, and which will certainly be stubbornly fought out with considerable losses on either side.

The gentle, cheery, happy-go-lucky Bambala are the only people we met with among whom such feats of arms as these tournaments take place. Although a more friendly and pleasant people to deal with than the Bambala it would be difficult to imagine, they have a besetting sin—that of gambling. At all hours of the day groups of men may be seen squatting on the ground in the village street playing a game more or less closely resembling dice, in which small pieces of ivory are shaken up in a cup and thrown. The stakes are often high, so high that a man will sometimes lose not only the whole of his property and his wives but even his own liberty, becoming the slave of the winner. It is a pity that this vice should have such a hold upon the Bambala, who are in every other respect a delightful, and, furthermore, a promising people; but gambling is their curse, as hemp smoking is the curse of the Batetela. During the few days we spent at Kikwit we







THE FRICTION-DRUM.



BAMBALA GAMBLING.

engaged a few servants locally, and enlisted some of the northern Bambala who came on by the steamer from Luano to volunteer for service with us. As I shall have to say something of our men and their behaviour during our journey from the Loange to the Kasai, I may here give some description of the people who constituted our party.

My little Baluba boy, Sam, had now become the majordomo of our servants, and since the departure of Jones he had been the only native regularly in our employ with the exception of our cook. Our cook, Luchima, who had served us faithfully and well during the whole of our journey up to this time, was taken so ill at Kikwit that it became apparent that he would be quite unfit for the hard work of marching by day and attending to his other duties in the evenings for many months to come. We therefore determined that he should return by steamer to Dima, and thence be conveyed to his home at Batempa, and arranged for another cook to be sent on to us from Dima, where there are always large numbers of servants of all kinds waiting to obtain employment. This man, Mabruki, was really an Akela, but in his early youth he had been sold as a slave to the Batetela, and to all intents and purposes belonged to this latter tribe. He was by no means an ideal cook, and, unfortunately, his health broke down just when we most needed every man that we could obtain. Torday engaged as "boy" a very small member of the Bayanzi tribe, who could not have been more than eight years old at the most. This child, Buya, was to learn his duties from Sam, and he displayed an

enthusiasm for his work and an intelligence which showed that in time he would become a most valuable servant; but at the time when he entered our employ he was absolutely ignorant of the white man and his ways, and thereby caused us sometimes no little amusement. He used to linger much longer than was necessary in Torday's tent every morning when making the bed, and we discovered he used to spend many happy minutes in admiring his countenance in Torday's shaving-glass, an object the like of which he had never seen before. I remember, too, that he was always getting lost during our stay in Kikwit, for frequently when we sent him upon an errand he would find something going on in the factory which amused or interested him, and he would forget to come back after delivering his message. All the same he was extremely useful and absolutely honest, the only thing that we ever found him to steal being the dog's dinner; for although he had plenty to eat himself, being a Bayanzi, and therefore gluttonous, he could not resist the temptation to purloin a piece of meat. We also engaged another youth of about twelve years of age, named Benga. This lad was rather a useless person, but he used to amuse us by his frequent disputes with Buya. The Bayanzi tribe are cannibals; the Bapende, to which Benga belonged, are not; and we once overheard the following conversation on the subject of cannibalism. "You Bapende," scornfully remarked Buya, "you kill dogs to eat them." "Well," replied Benga, "you Bayanzi can't talk; you eat men." This remark caused an outburst of indignation on the part of the little cannibal. "It is all very well to eat your

enemies when you have killed them in battle—is not that quite a natural thing to do?—but no decent person would think of eating his friend. You Bapende think nothing of eating dogs, the greatest friend of man.” Buya, I am afraid, was so disgusted at the idea of eating dogs, that he flavoured his remarks about the Bapende tribe with a good many expressions such as a European lad of his age might well be expected not to know the use of. We engaged four of the southern Bambala from the neighbourhood of Kikwit to accompany us as body-servants to carry our guns when out shooting, and our cameras, water-bottles, &c. when on the march. Torday had the greatest difficulty in preventing large numbers of these people from joining our expedition, for, as I have said, whole villages of them desired to go with us to the Kasai, so that when we left Kikwit we had to start some few days earlier than the date upon which we had told the local natives we should commence our journey. The four men whom we took with us were extremely useful followers during the months they were in our employ, and as I shall have occasion frequently to refer to them, I must give their names. Mayuyu, a fine tall young man of about twenty-two years old, habitually carried Torday’s gun. This man was perhaps the most intelligent of our servants, and, as my narrative will show, his popularity with the people in whose country we passed through contributed largely to the success of our journey. Mokenye, my own gun-bearer, though not so tall as Mayuyu, was a splendid specimen of a man. Very powerfully built and possessed of great endurance, he never seemed to feel fatigue, and his obliging

and cheerful disposition made him one of our most valuable servants. The other two were named Molele and Moame. From among the northern Bambala of Luana we selected eighteen men, all of whom Torday had previously known. These eighteen we hoped would be just sufficient to carry the absolute necessities of life and some of the objects we were going to collect for the Museum in case we should be obliged to retreat hurriedly from the unknown country of the Bakongo and Bashilele. We appointed one of these men, by name Kimbangala, to act as headman or capita. The factory of Kikwit made an excellent starting-point for a journey eastwards towards the Kasai. A steamer comes up the Kwilu every ten days from Dima, and deposits at Kikwit the stores and merchandise required for several other factories within a radius of about five or six days' journey. Between the Kwilu and the Loange rivers are situated three factories belonging to the Kasai Company: Athenes (or Alela, as it is called by the natives) lies in the country of the Babunda tribe, near to the upper waters of the Kancha River; Dumba and Bienge are factories situated upon the Lubue. Caravans are frequently sent from Kikwit to each of these three factories. Our plan was to proceed to Alela, where Torday could carry on the study of the Babunda people, commenced years ago by his compatriot, the Hungarian Ladislaus Magyar, and from thence we intended to proceed to Dumba, where we should find the stores sent on from Dima, and where we hoped to obtain some information concerning the Bakongo people which would enable us to definitely fix upon some plan for crossing the Loange and entering their territory. Both at

Alela and at Dumba we could keep in touch with the outside world by sending messengers to Kikwit. Before leaving the Kwilu we gave an exhibition to a large number of Bambala of one of the clock-work elephants which we had recently received from London. Torday had ordered these toys partly in the hope that some chief would covet them so much as to exchange curios for them which otherwise we should not be able to obtain, and partly because he thought it quite likely that the natives, who, of course, had never seen an automatic toy before, might attribute magical powers to the elephants, which they would most probably regard as the charm or fetish which watched over and protected us. The reception which the elephant met with at Kikwit certainly showed us that we had done well to have it sent out. The people were simply amazed at it. As the little toy, only some eight inches in height, having secretly been wound up in the seclusion of the tent, walked along the smooth top of a provision-box, waving its trunk, the natives shrank away from it, holding their hands over their mouths and gasping with astonishment. Immediately after seeing it several people desired to purchase it, but there was not one man in the crowd who could be induced to touch it. Evidently the Bambala believed that it was the most potent fetish they had ever seen. We did not display the elephant to every one who came to see us in the hope of getting a glimpse of it, for we were afraid that the awe which it inspired might be lessened if we allowed it to become too common a spectacle. We therefore showed it only upon one or two occasions, and made a great favour of letting it walk at all. We were now

confident that we had a powerful ally in the elephant, which might very likely prove more useful in the event of trouble with the natives than the ten military rifles which had not been unpacked during the earlier part of our journey, and which we now left at Kikwit to be forwarded to us at Dumba should we send for them.

When we crossed the Kwilu and started off towards Alela our way lay for some miles in a southerly direction almost parallel to the river, and accordingly we marched for a considerable distance through the forest which borders the stream, but which is really only about ten miles in width opposite to Kikwit, and gives place to a very hilly grass country, plentifully studded with trees. We passed through several villages occupied by Bambala, in one or two of which we exhibited the "elephant," always producing the greatest astonishment among the natives; but the territory of the Babunda begins at no great distance from the Kwilu, and after two very easy stages we arrived in their country. There we found villages very different from any that we had yet visited. Instead of building their huts in a group, the Babunda live in the midst of their plantations, and accordingly the villages cover a great many acres of ground, some even extending to a couple of miles in length. They are usually situated in a valley, and seen from a distance nestling at the foot of grassy slopes, which are here quite devoid of trees, they almost remind one of a village of the Sussex Downs. The huts themselves, dotted about with their fowl-houses and granaries in the millet fields, are square, and they have their doors so high above the ground that a little platform is built outside the entrance, by means of which the





A BABUNDA HUT.



BABUNDA PORTERS ENTERING ATHENES.



occupants can climb into the hut, and upon which the people sit and smoke their pipes in the evenings. The Babunda have enormous plantations, so that food is easily and cheaply obtainable in the country. We were welcomed cordially in every village, crowds of people meeting us on the road and accompanying us to our camping ground, singing in low and quite musical voices, for, like the neighbouring Bambala, the Babunda sing very well indeed. On our way we passed through two villages, between which a state of war existed, and we spent a night in one of them. One might have expected that one would find excitement raging in these villages, and to find some evidence of recent fighting. As a matter of fact, we noticed very little out of the common taking place in either village; all the men carried bows, but that is usual with the Babunda, so that it need not indicate that any hostilities were contemplated. When we arrived at the second of the two villages the chief welcomed us and conducted us to a shed beneath which we could rest, and then asked us to excuse him from entertaining us, as he was extremely busy making arrangements for a war! The last thing that he appeared to be preparing for was a breach of the peace. He seemed to be going round collecting quantities of the salt, neatly wrapped up in banana leaves, which is used so largely as currency in this district, and handing them over to a woman. We discovered, upon questioning the natives, that a man of this place had been killed in quarrel by a native from the neighbouring village through which we had passed. As is usual in such cases, no immediate attempt at reprisals had been made, but the chief of the murdered man's village had demanded the pay-

ment of a heavy indemnity for the slaying of his subject, threatening, in case the damage should not be forthcoming, to declare war. The sum demanded had not been paid, and accordingly the chief in whose village we were staying was obliged himself to pay damages to the relatives of the murdered man, and had told his warriors to hold themselves in readiness to commence hostilities with the offending village. At the time of our arrival the dead man had not been buried, and a number of women were singing a funeral dirge around the hut in which the body was laid. During the evening and the night which followed we observed no posting of sentries or any other similar indication that a state of war existed, and we subsequently learned that the affair had been settled by the ultimate payment of the indemnity by the village of the murderer. Little inter-village disputes such as these are of frequent occurrence, but they rarely lead to serious fighting, and any casual traveller passing through the belligerent villages might usually fail to notice that anything extraordinary was going on. White men or their servants are, as a rule, allowed to travel through districts where a state of war exists without any molestation whatever, for the natives are quite content to keep their differences to themselves, and strictly respect the neutrality of the white man. Some days after we had passed through this district, a new European agent of the Kasai Company followed in our footsteps to commence his work at Alela. This young man had not been long enough in Africa to learn anything of a native language, and when his boy attempted to explain to him that there was trouble between the two villages which I have mentioned, he failed to under-

stand what he was told. The boy thereupon resorted to signs, and, taking a bow, he tried to explain to the white man that fighting was likely to take place ; the young man, however, imagined from his gesticulations that some attack might be contemplated upon himself and his caravan. He therefore passed an anxious and, I believe, a sleepless night, and fully believed when we met him some days later that he had had a very fortunate escape from a dangerous situation.

We arrived at Alela, which lies about seventy miles to the south-south-east of Kikwit, upon the fifth day after crossing the Kwilu. The country around the village is entirely devoid of trees, except for a number of palms in the Babunda villages, and consists of a plateau between the hilly country which we passed through after crossing the Kwilu, and the even more hilly district to the eastwards through which the river Lubue flows. In this part of the world there is practically no game whatsoever ; the elephants which are to be found near the Kwilu do not forsake the woodlands which surround that river ; buffaloes do not exist between the Loange and the Kwilu, and antelopes, even the almost ubiquitous duiker, are very rarely seen. The country therefore around Alela is by no means a sportsman's paradise. The Kasai Company's factory, Athenes, is situated only two or three hundred yards from the Babunda village of Alela, and, the European agent having allowed us the use of an empty building in which we could develop photographs, &c., we pitched our camp in the factory, going over daily to the native village to carry on our work among the people. The Babunda are a fine stalwart race of men ; they are the blackest of any of the negroes with whom we

have come in contact, and they do not cover their persons with any kind of dye. The most remarkable thing about their appearance is the quantity of hair which the men possess (the women cut their hair short), and the great variety of ways in which they dress it. Sometimes it hangs in a great plaited mass down the back of their necks, at others it is arranged in tufts running backwards from the forehead suggestive of the comb of a cock, but always it is dressed and oiled with the greatest care; many of the young Babunda dandies make caps of palm cloth to fit their head-dress in order that their hair may not become ruffled by the wind. Although we were very well received by the Babunda, we found them extremely reticent upon all matters connected with their tribal customs or beliefs, and they were by no means so anxious to sell us objects for the Museum as we could wish. Many of them offered to sell us rubber, and one man remarked that if we would not buy rubber we were no friends of the people. The rubber trade is carried on in this district in rather a peculiar manner. In most other places the native, when he requires any of the commodities that the white man sells, collects some rubber and takes it to a factory; but among the Babunda, however, and their neighbours the Bapindji, rubber is used as a currency, and a weekly market is held out in the open plains to the west of Alela, where the natives exchange rubber for other goods or food-stuffs among themselves. The rubber therefore is not, as a rule, brought to the white man by the native who has collected it, and the greatest care is taken by the people that the European should not be allowed to attend one of these markets and so ascertain the price at which it there changes

hands. It would be extremely dangerous for a white man to attempt to intrude at one of these gatherings, for the Babunda are a warlike race, and they would be very likely to attack the trader if they thought he was spying upon them in order to find out how cheaply they sold the rubber among themselves. During a journey of a week's duration which we made to the west of Alela, we passed by one of these markets. The crowds of people were scattered about in little groups over an extensive area of the plain, but when we attempted to approach them we were peremptorily told that we were not wanted. We were anxious, of course, to avoid any dispute with the Babunda, with whom we were endeavouring to become friendly, and we accordingly passed on without appearing to take any notice of the market. We subsequently learned that fighting between the members of the various villages is by no means rare at these gatherings.

During our week's journey to the west we visited a number of Babunda villages, one of which, a very large one, had been the scene some few years before of some trouble between the natives and a European. Owing to some misunderstanding, which arose, I believe, from the fact that the white man was accompanied by a large number of followers, the people of this village, Mokulu, were under the impression that the traveller intended to attack them, and accordingly they had commenced hostilities by attacking him. The white man, although he had a number of rifles with him, had to give way before the warlike Babunda ; and although, I believe, there were few, if any, casualties on either side, the Babunda were certainly under the impres-

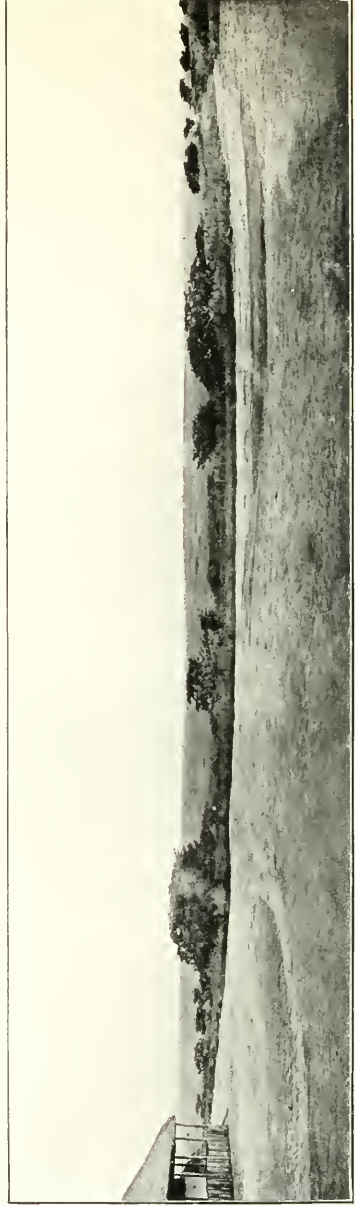
sion that they gained a glorious victory. The chief, Mokulu, therefore possesses a very high idea of his own importance and military strength. We visited this man in the hope that he would use his influence, which was undoubtedly great, to induce the natives to sell us a number of objects for the British Museum. When we arrived in the village he welcomed us cordially, but very quickly broached the subject of an exchange of presents, mentioning the fact that he was a very important personage, and that he hoped we would remember this in selecting the present we should give him in exchange for the goat and chickens which he offered us. We gave him a pretty substantial present, and then began to discuss the purchase of curios. Mokulu assured us that there were many of the objects we required, such as carved wooden cups, embroidered cloth, weapons, &c., in the village, and that if we would give him a further present he would certainly be able to secure us a great many of them. We therefore promised him a present, and he departed into the village ostensibly with the purpose of requesting his subjects to deal with us. Shortly afterwards he returned, but no one brought us any curios for sale, and upon our inquiring if he had been unable to find any, he simply laughed and said, "O yes; the objects are coming now," and left us. After this had happened three or four times he asked us to give him a present in advance, and having received it he again returned to the village, but came back empty-handed. Whenever we mentioned the subject of curios to him, he simply laughed and looked at us with a twinkle in his eye, and not one object could we buy in his village. The fact is he had not the slightest intention of







THE KWILU VALLEY AT BONDIO.



A VIEW FROM THE FACTORY OF ATHENES.

helping us in any way, and he had certainly swindled us of the goods we had given him. As a rule, of course, it is far wiser never to give a present to a chief until one is quite certain what one will get in exchange for it, but in this case we knew that if we did not treat Mokulu handsomely we should stand no chance whatever of obtaining anything from him. We therefore speculated, and lost; and I think that Mokulu was far more pleased at the knowledge that he had cheated us than he was with the goods we had given him.

After leaving Mokulu's village we came once more to the banks of the Kwilu where dwell the Bapindji tribe, and stayed at a village called Bondo. The scenery here is remarkably fine; the Kwilu, which is at this point not more than one hundred yards wide, rushes swiftly through a cleft or ravine in the plateau about nine hundred feet in depth and a mile and a half to two miles at the summit. The surrounding country consists of grass land thickly studded with stunted trees, and only upon the very banks of the river is there any woodland. Here, however, there is a mass of luxuriant vegetation, and the stream rushes violently over a rocky bed beneath the shade of numbers of palm-trees. Just at Bondo the rocks practically put the course of the river into a series of rapids or falls, the roar of which can be heard at some miles' distance in the calm of the tropical evening. We strolled down from the village to photograph some of these falls in the company of one or two native lads. When we reached the water's edge these boys stepped into the river with, as we thought, the object of washing their feet. Suddenly one of them sprang into the stream with a cry, was

caught by the rush of water, and swept downwards towards some rocks at a terrific pace. The whole thing happened in a moment, and we thought that the boy was drowned before either of us had time to do anything ; but when he neared the rocks the current turned him towards the slack water near the banks, and with a few powerful strokes he swam out of the stream into the still waters, and thence calmly walked ashore. Seeing our look of astonishment at his safe return, the lad merely laughed and remarked that if one knew the currents one could always allow oneself to be swept downwards in the rapids with a certainty of regaining the still waters a little lower down, and he told us that the practice of this swimming feat was one of the pastimes of the boys of Bondo. To show us that he was not exaggerating he went through the performance two or three times, and I have never seen any feat which it appeared must so certainly end in destruction, and yet which, the native informed us, is in reality remarkably easy. Whether or not it is easy the Bapindji must be distinctly fine swimmers to attempt it. The chief of Bondo, which, by the way, is an extremely beautiful village with its picturesque grass huts and their little granaries suspended upon poles to keep the food-stuffs safe from the attacks of mice, was an old and very decrepit man with a remarkably suspicious nature. He was much impressed with the exhibition that we gave him of our fetish, the walking elephant, and in the evening he came privately to us and offered to buy it. He told us that owing to his infirmities he was unable to go about his village as much as he should wish, and he had no doubt that many things were said about him behind his back which

he would like to overhear, and which would not be said if he were able to go about more among his subjects. If he possessed the elephant he could send it out in the evenings to walk around the village, where it could spy upon his people, and upon its return could report to him any plots against his authority which might be hatched. As we possessed two of these elephants, Torday thought it just possible there might at Bondo be some strange fetish or other object which we had not yet seen, and which we should like to secure for the British Museum. He therefore told the chief that he might possibly be induced to part with the elephant if anything that he specially desired was offered in exchange for it. The chief thereupon commenced to offer us all manner of objects, none of which were of sufficient interest to induce us to part with the toy, and finally he said he would give us quite a large quantity of ivory or one or two slaves in exchange for it. No doubt we should have been commercially the gainers had we accepted the offer of the tusks, but we had not come to Africa to trade in ivory, and we did not wish to compete with the Kasai Company in this matter ; so we decided not to sell the elephant at Bondo, and it turned out lucky for us that we retained both the toys until we reached the unknown country. The Bapindji, who in appearance closely resemble the clay-covered Bam-bala, are, as a rule, a very peaceful people, but not long before our visit they had played a joke upon a trader who had, it appears, shown some nervousness in visiting them. They had crowded round him in the village, and had commenced to touch and examine his baggage, thinking that he was afraid of them because he did not object to their doing so.

They quickly passed on from touching his clothing, and finally when the five armed men who accompanied him had thrown down their rifles and fled, the natives proceeded to remove his hat and pull his hair! After this they stole all his belongings and ordered him out of the village. Two or three days later they returned to him everything that they had stolen in perfect safety, for they had only purloined the goods to frighten him, and had doubtless thoroughly enjoyed what they regarded as an excellent joke. The natives of this part of Africa are rather partial to practical jokes, sometimes of rather a grim character. I have heard a story of a certain powerful chief, Yongo, threatening two white men, whose followers had deserted them, with instant death if they did not retire into a hut in his village and remain there as his prisoners. All day long this hut was closely guarded by armed warriors, but in the night when the travellers cautiously peered from the doorway they discovered that all the guards had been removed, leaving them free to escape, but that over the doorway was suspended a human ham, left there, doubtless, to give them one more unpleasant surprise before they made the escape which no one hindered them from attempting.

Upon our return to Alela after our trip in the Bapindji country, we had to wait for several days for the arrival of stores which we had left at Kikwit, and during this time we did all the work we could among the local Babunda, but owing to their extraordinary reticence, the results of Torday's researches among them are meagre compared with those obtained among the Bushongo. Although almost every evening singing in the village told us that some ceremony was in progress, we could see very little of what was going on, and the only event of any particular interest

which we witnessed was a funeral. The body, wrapped from head to foot in palm cloth, was laid out in a hut, around which the mourners were wailing and playing small rattles, the men covered with a red dye and the women with ashes. After some hours of weeping, in which a great number of persons took part, the corpse was carried out of the village and buried in the plains, where nothing but an old cooking-pot was left to mark the last resting-place of the dead. While waiting at Alela we were able to form some estimate of the skill which our followers possessed in the use of bows and arrows. We invited a few Babunda who happened to be passing to take part in a shooting contest, and the rivalry between the various tribes of which our caravan contained representatives and the local marksmen became extremely keen. We found that all our people, including little Buya, were remarkably good shots, and the rapidity with which they could loose off their arrows was extraordinary. We noticed that some of the Babunda shot in a kneeling position, and that our four southern Bambala possessed a curious method of defence, in which they used their bows as shields. Torday had previously noticed this custom, and, taking a blunt arrow, we put it to the test. My gun-bearer, Mokenye, gave us a demonstration of it. We threw the arrow at him, and, as it approached, with a sharp turn of the wrist he struck it aside with his bow, and so skilful was he in warding off the missile that only once did we succeed in getting an arrow through his guard. Of course this method of defence would be by no means certain against an arrow which, having been shot at a short range, was travelling at

a great pace; but the Bambala assured us that they could really be sure of defending themselves from arrows which were moving less swiftly at the end of a long flight. The result of our shooting competition was that we learned we could depend upon our followers to at least hold their own with their national weapons should we have the misfortune to be attacked by the Bakongo or Bashilele. Alela, like the whole of the Kwilu region, is a comparatively healthy spot. In this district there are few mosquitos (upon the shores of the Kwilu there are practically none), and the tsetse fly appears to be so rare that we often wondered whether the great plains around Alela could not be turned into a pasturage for domestic cattle if the beasts could be brought into the country without bringing the fly with them. In the whole of the country we visited during our two years' journey domestic cattle are not to be found, with the exception of a few head imported by the white man at Lusambo and Dima. Further to the south, however, near the Portuguese frontier, the natives breed a certain number of these animals, and also sheep. At the present moment the only domestic creatures which the natives keep in those parts of the Kasai which we visited are chickens and goats, although a few sheep, which have been imported from the south, are here and there to be found. Although, owing to the lack of shade, the sun at Alela can be very trying, there is often a cooling breeze sweeping over the plateau which serves to temper the fierce heat, and at the time we left Alela—that is to say, at the end of April 1909—rainstorms and tornadoes were of frequent occurrence, the rainy season having continued, so we were informed, rather later than usual.



## CHAPTER VIII

### INTO THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY

As soon as our loads and a European mail—the last which we should see for some time to come—had arrived from Kikwit, we engaged a number of Babunda porters and started off to the Kasai Company's factory of Dumba upon the banks of the Lubue, a journey which we accomplished in two long stages. Upon the morning of the second day we crossed the Lubue, and then turned northwards, following its right bank to the factory. The river where we crossed it is only about thirty yards wide, and is broken up into rapids by great masses of rock in its bed, over which a rough bridge of poles has been erected. When we reached the valley of the Lubue we left the high plateau which exists between that river and the Kwilu and entered a very hilly country. At Dumba the Lubue is about forty yards in width, and there is no strip of forest upon its banks. The hills rise sheer from the water's edge to a height of three or four hundred feet above the river, and behind them the steep undulations attain a height of fully twelve hundred feet above the stream. The country here consists of grass land studded with large numbers of those stunted trees which around Alela are conspicuous by their absence. Between Dumba and the point where the Lubue falls into the Kasai the river is unbroken by rapids, so that

a canoe or iron whale boat can ply between Dumba and the factory called Lubue upon the Kasai, but the stream is so strong that it takes a well-manned boat eight days to reach Dumba from the main river, and the journey is by no means a pleasant one, for the Badinga, who inhabit the country near to the Kasai, are very hostile to the white man, and will not sell any food to a traveller ascending or descending the Lubue; in addition to this there is always quite a possibility that they might attack him. The factory of Dumba lies upon the bank of the river closely surrounded by hills, and owing to this enclosed situation the heat there is far more oppressive than upon the wind-swept uplands of Alela, and although the Kasai Company have been installed there only four years, two little crosses in a neatly kept space just outside the factory indicate that the place is unhealthy for the white man. But excepting for the climate the post of Dumba appeared to us to be just what a Congolese factory should be; this is owing to the untiring energy of the agent who was in charge of it at the time of our visit. Monsieur Bombeecke is one of those happily constituted people who can make himself comfortable and contented under any circumstances, and he has rendered Dumba quite the neatest and most comfortable factory that we visited. He always has one or two European agents living with him. One of these, who had just left previous to our arrival, had been by trade a carpenter, and Monsieur Bombeecke had caused him to instruct several natives in this craft, with the result that in the workshop which he has built all manner of useful articles are manufactured. Monsieur Bombeecke and his



CROSSING THE LUBUE.



A BAPENDE DANCE AT DUMBA.



native carpenter had turned out a very neat and ingenious wooden letter-press to replace the iron one belonging to the Company, which had been broken, and the chairs, tables, and other furniture at Dumba, although of course of a somewhat rough and ready nature, were of a far better quality than one would expect in so remote a district, and the woodwork of his bungalow was all of exceptional solidity and neatness; the doors closed properly, the sashes fitted the windows, and there was a strong and well made flight of steps leading from the ground to the door.

But perhaps Dumba is most remarkable for its vegetable gardens. Monsieur Bombeecke thoroughly understands the cultivation of vegetables, and he had established two gardens at his factory, one for use in the dry season and the other during the rains, with the result that all the year round he has so abundant a supply of vegetables that he can send most welcome presents of them to both his neighbours at Alela and Bienge. Upon arriving in Africa this enterprising trader had commenced the study of cookery with the aid of a cookery book, and as a result he had been able to teach his cook to serve up a dinner which would do credit to any small country hotel with nothing but the plain stores which the Company issues to its agents to compose it. Monsieur Bombeecke rightly believes that in order to maintain one's strength in Central Africa it is absolutely necessary to study as much as possible one's personal comfort, and his own robust condition testifies to the value of his methods. But it was not only by the creature comforts of good living that our stay at Dumba was rendered enjoyable, for we now

began to learn something more of the Bakongo people, and our hope of being able to enter their territory began to rise by leaps and bounds, for we discovered that Monsieur Bombeecke, whose popularity among the natives surrounding his factory is very great, had come into friendly contact with one or two outlying Bakongo villages. From him we learned that although the main portion of the Bakongo tribe resides in the unexplored country to the east of the Loange River, there are a certain number of their villages upon its left or western shore, dotted about among settlements of the Bapende, with which latter people Monsieur Bombeecke was on very friendly terms. He suggested to us that he should accompany us to one of these Bapende villages near the Loange whose chief he knew to be friendly with the Bakongo, and that having associated ourselves with this chief we should endeavour to obtain through him an introduction to the Bakongo. As, thanks to Sam, the only member of our party who had been with us at Pana, we enjoyed a tremendous reputation as hunters (I discovered that I myself had shot twenty buffaloes in a week!), we decided to attempt to enter the unknown country in the capacity of sportsmen, and to give out that we would be willing to shoot buffaloes or any other game and supply the villages with meat if the natives would allow us to stay with them and to slowly make our way eastwards towards the Kasai. We knew that we should be misunderstood and almost certainly arouse suspicion if we told the Bakongo, as we had told the people of the Mushenge, that we had come among them in order to learn something of their ways; we therefore considered it wiser to keep the real object of our

coming a secret. We could hardly expect to enter the unknown country as traders, for the Bakongo have never yet traded with the white man; missionaries have never even been heard of by the natives of this district, so that we could not appear to pose as such; and indeed it seemed probable that the capacity of hunters was the only one in which we could reasonably hope to effect an entry into the Bakongo country. Monsieur Bombeecke informed us that although he knew next to nothing about the Bakongo he believed there existed somewhere on the eastern side of the Loange one great paramount chief of the whole tribe, whose name he had heard was Goman Vula, a piece of information which seemed to coincide with what we had heard at the Mushenge of a big chief among the Bashilele people. We were confident that if once we could visit this ruler of the Bakongo and establish anything like friendly relations with him we should be able to make a real study of his tribe, so to find and make the acquaintance of this man became the object of the early part of our journey to the Kasai. But although we had now learned that we could easily get into touch with natives who were friends and neighbours of the Bakongo, we fully expected to have to spend many weeks in hunting near the Loange River before we could get to know the Bakongo sufficiently well for them to allow us to cross the stream and enter the unknown land.

In the immediate neighbourhood of Dumba there are settlements of both the Bapende and Babunda peoples, so that the days we spent at the factory were by no means idle, for large numbers of both tribes came to see us, and upon one occasion the Bapende held a dance in our honour in

which nearly three hundred people took part. The Babunda were not quite so reticent as those who dwelt around Alela, and Torday was able to amplify his notes upon that tribe, while I occupied a good deal of my time in taking and developing photographs of various native types. The Bapende are much given to the use of the tukula dye, which is so common among the Bushongo. They wear their hair in little tassels resembling a mop on the tops of their heads, and it is by no means uncommon to find those whose hair is not of sufficient length to admit of its being dressed in this fashion wearing wigs. The Bapende ladies adorn their legs with such a weight of brass in the shape of anklets, sometimes as many as eight on each leg, the total weight of which would be about 16 lbs., that walking is extremely difficult, and they are often to be seen standing upon one leg and supporting their other foot in their hand, or pausing and kneeling down or sitting to rest even during quite a short walk. The most ornamental objects which the Bapende manufacture are small models of human faces carved out of ivory and worn suspended from a string around the neck. These little masks are purchased from the medicine-man, and are considered as infallible charms against various diseases. Our way from Dumba to the Loange lay entirely through Bapende territory. The day before we set out on our journey all our Bambala porters came to us in a body and inquired if it was really true that we still intended to enter the country of the Bakongo. Upon Torday replying in the affirmative, our men said that the Baluba employés of the factory had told them that we should all most certainly be massacred if we made the attempt, and



they requested us to allow them to return to their homes. Torday immediately acceded to their request, and told them to return to him at midday to receive their wages and their rations for the journey. We were now in a most awkward predicament, for we did not know the local Bapende sufficiently well to be able to induce them to accompany us upon the journey which they could not but regard as highly dangerous, and we certainly could not hope to succeed in reaching the Kasai if we were accompanied by any of the low-class Baluba from the factory, even if these cowardly people could have been persuaded to go with us. Our outlook, therefore, was not very bright. Long before midday, however, our Bambala returned and inquired whether, if they returned to their homes, we should persist in going on towards the Kasai. Torday assured them that we should. "Then of course we will go with you," said the Bambala, and from that moment not one of our men showed the slightest desire to turn back. When we left Dumba we marched over a ridge, about 1000 feet above the level of the river, which ran north and south beside the banks of the Lubue, forming a barrier between that river and the valley of the Luana, a stream some fifty yards in width which flows parallel to the Lubue midway to the Loange and falls into the Lubue a short distance above the confluence with that river to the Kasai. The Luana flows through a valley about eight miles wide, and to the east of this valley there lies another high ridge separating the basin of the Luana from that of the Loange. A greater portion of this country consists of grass land, but there is a good deal of wood around the Luana. Monsieur Bombeecke, as he had

promised, accompanied us upon our journey, and, marching by easy stages, we reached upon the sixth day Kangala, the village of the Bapende chief who we hoped would introduce us to the Bakongo. The day before reaching Kangala we caught our first glimpse of a Bakongo village. This lay in a small clearing in the woods, and was surrounded by a stout stockade consisting of posts about eight or nine feet high driven firmly into the ground. Monsieur Bombeecke had passed by this village before, but had never been invited to enter it, and, knowing the hostility of the Bakongo to the white man, he had never risked arousing their indignation by attempting to pass the narrow entrance to the village without a special invitation from the chief. It had been his custom, however, to halt for a few minutes under a shed situated outside the walls, and there have a friendly chat with such of the natives as would come and talk to him. Upon our arrival a good number of the villagers came out to see us, and the chief offered us some palm wine in quaintly-carved black wooden cups, in the manufacture of which the Bakongo are remarkably skilful. Torday noticed at once a similarity in the patterns with which these cups were ornamented and those which we had found among the Bushongo, another piece of evidence to support his theory that these two peoples are nearly related. We offered a good price for one or two of the cups, and in a few minutes had succeeded in purchasing several. We then continued our march. In every village we passed through we took all the opportunities we could of purchasing curios, among which we secured specimens of the curious wooden masks and palm cloth dresses in which the Bapende boys array





KANGALA.



BAPENDE BOYS WEARING MASKS.

themselves for the ceremony of initiation when they enter man's estate. During this ceremony, which lasts several days, the lads have to spend all their time in the forest or in the bush, and are obliged to keep out of sight of other people. The purchase of one of the masks might easily have led us into trouble, for one of our boys who belonged to another tribe and was quite unversed in Bapende customs, carried the thing about the villages exposed to the public gaze, a proceeding which caused a good deal of indignation on the part of the Bapende, who firmly believe that if a woman sets eyes on one of these masks she will die. Luckily no women happened to be passing at the time, so we were soon able to sooth the ruffled feelings of the natives.

The village of Kangala, whose chief was to put us in communication with the Bakongo, lies in open country upon the ridge which forms the western or left-hand side of the Loange River. Except that the country around it consists of grass land, the place is somewhat suggestive of a Saharan oasis. The huts are dotted about in a veritable forest of palm-trees, and few if any other kind of trees are to be found within the village. Everywhere you go you walk in the shade of the palms, and the little square grass-thatched houses look extremely pretty in so picturesque an environment. The place is a large one, and crowds of natives can be seen at all hours of the day manufacturing cloth at looms placed under the trees, making baskets, or pounding cassava into flour. The chief, Dilonda, had erected quite a commodious hut for the use of Monsieur Bombeecke, whom he evidently held in very high esteem, and it was outside this hut, accompanied by one or two chiefs of lesser importance,

that we found Dilonda waiting for us upon our arrival in the village. He wore around his neck a great number of charms, such as the little ivory masks to which I have alluded, similar masks made in metal, leopards' teeth, whistles, and other objects. He was a big and powerfully-built man, save that one of his legs appeared to be shrivelled, so that he was obliged to walk with the aid of a stick. Dilonda received us well, Monsieur Bombeecke's introduction evidently being a sufficient guarantee as to our respectability, and after an interchange of presents (chickens and a goat on his side, trade cloth, &c., upon ours), we proceeded to impress the crowd which was assembled by playing a few pieces upon the phonograph. This, as usual, astonished and delighted the audience, and we could see that the people were quite prepared to regard us as something in the way of wizards. Monsieur Bombeecke informed Dilonda that we were mighty hunters on our way home, that in order to reach our country it was necessary for us to proceed across the territory of the Bakongo and Bashilele to the upper waters of the Kasai, and that on our way we were ready to shoot buffaloes, elephants, hippopotami—in short, any kind of animal, and give the meat to the natives whose villages we passed through. He also explained that we wished to purchase all manner of objects such as the natives had never previously had an opportunity of selling, and that we had not come in search of rubber, a commodity with which he well knew the Bakongo would have nothing to do. He then asked Dilonda if he knew anything of the country around the Loange. We were considerably surprised when the chief clearly showed us that he knew how

the Kasai took a turn to the westward at its confluence with the Sankuru, for it is very rare indeed to find a native who knows anything of the geography of a district so far from his own village. Finding Dilonda very agreeable we very soon came to the point, and asked him directly whether he would be prepared, if we gave him a substantial present, to establish friendly relations between us and the Bakongo. We said that we had heard that there was a place upon the Loange some few days' march to the northward where buffaloes abounded, and we inquired if he would be willing to accompany us there and to help us to induce the Bakongo to allow us to hunt in their country.

Now Dilonda was a greedy person, and I am sure that the offer of a substantial present would lead him to attempt almost anything, but at the same time Monsieur Bombeecke told us that we could rely upon the man, and that if he consented to help us we could be assured that he would use his best endeavours to do so. Dilonda at once showed himself much against our scheme of going to the north. He told us that although the Bakongo in his own immediate neighbourhood were sufficiently hostile to the European to desire to have nothing whatever to do with him, those further to the north were far more hostile still, and, although it was just possible he might in time be able to induce them to receive us, it was quite likely that we should be attacked if we entered their territory. He himself and his tribe did not desire to enter into any quarrel with the Bashongo, of whom, I think, they stand in considerable awe, and we had insufficient men with us to be able to defend ourselves successfully in the event of trouble

breaking out. He therefore considered that our best plan would be to remain for a day or two in his village while he proceeded to a small Bakongo settlement called Insashi, which lay upon the left bank of the Loange only a few miles from Kangala. He explained to us that the chief of this village was his personal friend, and he had no doubt that we would be peacefully received there. We therefore decided to take his advice and to remain for a few days at Kangala. During this time we showed Dilonda our clock-work elephant, and nothing would satisfy him but that we should present him with one if he could establish friendly relations with the Bakongo. The less inclined we were to part with the elephant the more anxious was he to possess it, and after a time we became certain that there was very little that he would not do for us in order to obtain so powerful a fetish. We knew, however, sufficient of the negro not to part with the coveted toy before Dilonda had fully earned it, so we agreed with him that should we succeed in reaching the Kasai we should send the elephant to Monsieur Bombecke, who undertook to give it to Dilonda. In the meantime, as an earnest of our good intentions, we gave him a substantial present of iron and trade cloth. Dilonda told us that the two commodities which would prove the most saleable in the country beyond the Loange were machettes and bars of iron. Now those two commodities are about the most awkward to carry of any of the trade goods used in the Kasai. The machettes are not so bad as the iron, for a considerable number of these knives can be made up into a load to be carried on a pole by two men, but the square or round bars of iron, cut



into lengths of about one foot each, are extremely heavy, and at the rate at which they are sold it practically means that one has to employ one man to carry every eight shillings' worth of this "money" that one takes. With our very small number of porters the difficulty presented by this was a considerable one, for it meant that in the unknown country our own men would have to undertake each stage of the journey at least twice until the iron was used up, for even if we could persuade the Bakongo to carry our loads for us, we should certainly not be able to trust them with a commodity which they covet so strongly. From Kangala we sent a small caravan back to Dumba, where we purchased from Monsieur Bombeecke's assistant a further supply of iron and knives. As we stood upon the high ground outside Dilonda's village we could look across the valley of the Loange, which is here about seven or eight miles wide, and catch a glimpse of the unknown country which lay before us. We had heard from other white men that the Bakongo and Bashilele are cannibals of the most terrible character inhabiting a densely wooded country, and yet as we gazed across the river, we could see to the eastwards, beyond a comparatively narrow strip of forest which borders the Loange, great rolling grassy downs on which scarcely a tree was visible. Evidently the description of the country which had been given to us was completely false, and we asked ourselves why should not the ferocity of the inhabitants also have been much exaggerated? We thought that while we were at Kangala it would be just as well to shoot a little game, if any existed, in order to show the natives that we really were hunters, and to give

them some idea of the power of our sporting rifles, but although there were a few buffaloes in the neighbourhood, we were not able to obtain a shot at them owing to the anxiety on the part of the Bapende to obtain a present for discovering where the animals were feeding.

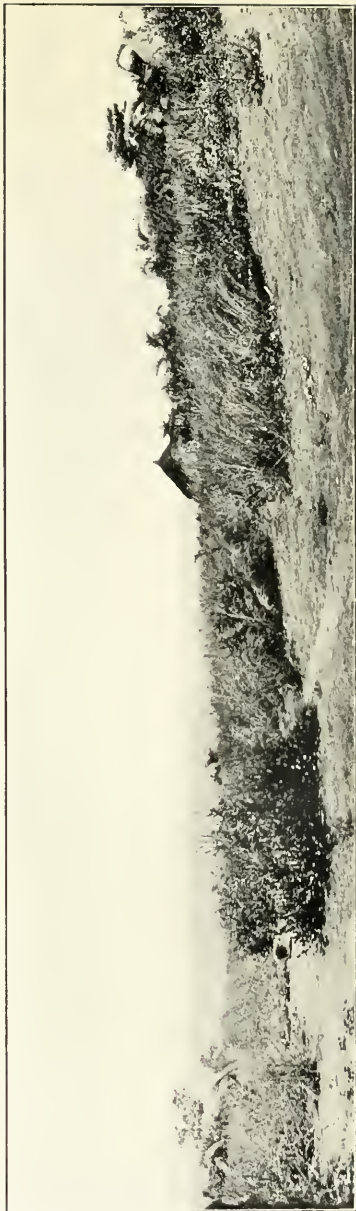
Upon one occasion two or three of Dilonda's people, who had gone out to look for game, came upon some buffaloes lying down in a cassava field, but the men made such a noise in their dispute as to who should go and inform us that the animals were there, and so obtain a present, that the beasts were frightened and took to the forest in the direction of a Bakongo village, whither it was impossible for us to follow them, for here, as in most parts of Central Africa, each village has its own hunting ground, and any attempt at poaching might easily lead to war. Dilonda himself caused us quite a lot of amusement. Although he considered himself no small personage, and was evidently the greatest of all the Bapende chiefs in the neighbourhood, it used to delight him to sit upon a little stool beside our table and beg for spoonfuls of mustard. For a time we could not understand his craving for this delicacy, but Monsieur Bombecke, who knew him well, explained to us that he ate the stuff solely with the object of causing a thirst, for Dilonda was much addicted to palm wine. Not only was he fond of the mustard, but he was extremely anxious to possess the little earthenware pot that contained it. It appears that he was in the habit of boasting to his cronies of the enormous number of cups of palm wine which he could consume at a sitting, and he thought that if he drank the beverage out of so small a vessel as a

mustard-pot the number of drinks he could get through would be enormously increased. No doubt he would not have allowed his boon companions to know the trick he was playing upon them by using this small cup, and I tremble to think of the results which might ensue if his friends, using the ordinary sized wooden cup which would contain about three-quarters of a pint, should attempt to imbibe a greater number of drinks than Dilonda. Dilonda was for ever attempting to get something out of us, and with this object he was always pointing out all the services he was going to render us, and the accuracy of the information which he imparted to us. He usually ended up every sentence with the remark, "O, he is no liar is Dilonda." But although he was quite ready to accept anything that we offered him, Dilonda was by no means generous in the presents he offered to us. He possessed a few of the black and white sheep which are bred by the Badjok near the Portuguese frontier. The Badjok frequently sent caravans up into this district and into the country between the Loange and the Kasai in search of rubber and ivory; in fact we had high hopes of meeting with a caravan of these people, who are friendly to the European, during the course of our journey eastwards, for we believed it was quite possible they might help us to reach our destination. Dilonda had doubtless purchased his sheep from these traders, but he kept them more as an ornament to his village than as animals to be killed and eaten. We several times cast favourable glances upon these animals. With the exception of a few meals at Dima, four months before, we had not tasted mutton since the Christmas of 1907, and

I think that life in Central Africa tends to make one greedy, particularly if one is living in districts where game is so scarce that one has little or no break in the monotony of meals off skinny chickens and insipid goats' meat. We therefore hoped that Dilonda, in exchange for the numerous presents that we made him, might feel himself bound to offer us a sheep. One day when we made some remark about his flock, the crafty old chief called us aside and said, "I think your boys are thieves. When I saw you looking at the sheep, and I remembered that I had only given you one small goat, shame seized me, and I said to myself, 'Dilonda, give the white man one of your sheep'; so I called your boys and gave them a fine fat animal and told them to take it to you, but I do not think you have received it. Your boys must have stolen it and eaten it themselves." We did not believe this story, of course, but we made inquiries and discovered that no sheep had ever been handed over to our servants. When we told Dilonda of this the old ruffian merely laughed, amused rather than annoyed that his falsehood had been discovered and his meanness found out. In a few days old Dilonda informed us that the Bakongo of Insashi would be willing to allow us to visit their village, and we accordingly started out, accompanied by Monsieur Bombeecke, Dilonda, and a couple of lesser chiefs, to cover the five or six miles in the valley of the Loange between Kangala and Insashi. As we drew near to the Bakongo village, the Bapende warned us to tell our men to make as little noise as possible so that the Bakongo might not at the last moment take fright at our approach and either desert their village or attack us. As we stepped



A BAKONGO VILLAGE, PHOTOED FROM THE TOP OF ITS STOCKADE.



A VIEW OF THE UNKNOWN COUNTRY FROM KANGALA.



out of the woods into the clearing in which Insashi stood, we fully expected to find a crowd of curious, if not hostile people waiting to look at us. To our surprise, however, the few people whom we saw outside the stockade were all engaged upon their ordinary daily occupations, such as weaving or wood-carving, and paid little or no attention to us as we walked to the shed outside the stockade, which the Bapende informed us had been placed at our disposal. As we were seated beneath the shade of this structure, the Bakongo chief came to welcome us. Torday, through the medium of a Bapende interpreter, explained to this man the object of our visit, laying stress upon the fact that we only required to go to the Kasai and to spend our time in hunting upon the journey. He gave the chief a very substantial present, and asked him if he would allow his people to ferry us across the river in their canoes. We were a little surprised to learn that there were no canoes upon the left bank of the river. This is a precaution against invasion, for the Loange is fully half a mile in width, and its current is so strong as to preclude the possibility of an enemy crossing it by swimming; the Bakongo, therefore, by keeping their canoes on the right, or eastern shore, cause the river to become an insurmountable barrier to any would-be invader. Should the Bakongo on the left bank desire to visit their countrymen they have to go down to the water's edge and shout until a canoe is sent to them from a village which lies just opposite on the eastern shore. The chief of Insashi, well pleased with his present, informed us that he and Dilonda would ask the people of the further bank to ferry them over on the morrow, and that they

would then use their best endeavours to persuade them to send sufficient canoes to carry us and our loads. While we were talking to the chief a considerable number of natives, including many women, crowded round to look at us, and we purchased several articles from them, always paying very high prices with the object of inducing them to bring us other things for sale. In the evening Torday and I thought that it would be as well to shoot a few monkeys in the forest close at hand in order that we might present their carcasses to the chief as food. We therefore went out and bagged a colobus and one or two cercopithecus monkeys, with which the chief of Insashi was greatly pleased. But on the morrow we repented bitterly of having shot them, for the report of the 12-bore and the crack of the Mannlicher had been heard across the river, and the chief of Insashi, when he returned the following evening from his trip to the other bank, informed us that the Bakongo there had come to the conclusion that we were attacking Insashi, and that he had had the greatest difficulty in persuading them to send canoes for us. At last, however, attracted by hearing of the presents we had given to the chief of Insashi, they had agreed to do so, but he, the chief, told us that we must not be surprised if at the last moment they changed their minds. We had not been many hours in Insashi before we were invited to pass through the entrance of the stockade and inspect the interior of the village. The houses there resembled those of the Bushongo, and, each having its own little courtyard, they reminded us of the huts of the Mushenge. There were certain other evidences as well, in the character of the



weapons used and the various utensils that we saw about the place, that the Bakongo were in reality related to the subjects of the Nyimi. In the centre of the village there was an open space where meetings and dances are held, the huts being built around this in close proximity to the stockade. Between the buildings and the wall, however, there was a passage admitting of the defenders hurrying to and fro in case the village was attacked. The stockade was strongly built of palm-leaf stems, attaining a height of about ten feet. These stems are placed so close together as to form a very efficient defence against an enemy armed only with bows and arrows or spears, and any attempt to rush these defences across the open space which had been cleared around them without first breaching the stockade could only result in very heavy loss to the attacking side if the garrison put up a determined defence. A modern rifle bullet would, of course, pass through the stockade as through so much paper, but it would be extremely difficult to observe the position of the defenders through the fence so as to be able to inflict any great loss upon them. The gates in the stockade, of which there are several, are so small as to admit of only one person entering at a time.

For a space of about fifty yards all round the defences, outside the village, the ground was cleared, and here stood a number of granaries in which the crops are stored. These granaries are built as neatly as the dwelling-houses, and stand upon piles in order to keep away mice and other vermin. It struck us as remarkable that the supply of food should be kept outside the village, but they are situated well within arrow-range of the defences, and I think that the reason

for building them apart from the dwelling-houses must be to prevent the food-stuffs from attracting a large amount of vermin into the village. Also outside the walls we found a number of sheds, used as shelters from the sun, in which the Bakongo weave their cloth and pass their time in smoking and discussing the local gossip, as do the natives of Misumba. We soon fell to discussing with the chief of Insashi the route we should have to follow in order to reach the Kasai. We discovered that he knew very little about it, he never having been so far as the great river himself, but we did learn from him that, as Monsieur Bombeecke had told us, there is in reality one great chief of all the Bakongo people. He would say very little about this great man, and even went so far as to state that he did not know where his village lay, but by putting together scraps of information we gathered that it must be situated nearer to the Loange than to the Kasai, somewhere to the north-east of the point where we should cross the former river. We told the chief of Insashi that we would handsomely reward any one who would put us into communication with the great chief, and that we had some valuable presents for that important personage if he would deign to receive us. The chief of Insashi promised us that he would ask his compatriots to help us in this respect, but the name Goman Vula was always mentioned with bated breath, and we could clearly see that it would be difficult to obtain access to his village or, if we failed in this, any precise information about him or his court. During the couple of days that we spent at Insashi we employed our followers in the construction of a rough bridge over the extremely swampy ground which lies





CARVING A WOODEN CUP AT INSASHI.



THE CHIEF OF INSASHI CALLING FOR CANOES.

in the forest between the village and the river bank. Nobody in the least objected to our doing this, and we found ourselves free to do practically what we liked and to wander about the village without causing any annoyance to anybody; and as the natives upon the eastern shore had promised to fetch us in their canoes, we began to think that our journey to the Kasai would after all present few difficulties, and I remember that we wrote very cheerful letters home, to be taken back to Dumba by Monsieur Bombeecke when he returned after seeing us across the Loange. On the 21st of May we bade adieu to this gentleman, whose popularity with the natives had contributed so much to the cordiality of the reception we had met with among the Bapende, and also to our introduction to the Bakongo, and conveyed all our loads from the village to the waterside. Some canoes appeared under the bushes of the farther shore and approached us, but the sight of so many packages led the boatmen to believe that our party must be a very much larger one than it had been represented to be, and they returned to their own side of the river in doubt as to our peaceful intentions. The chief of Insashi thereupon commenced to shout for them to return. As the Loange is, at this point, fully eight hundred yards wide, and as it took quite two hours continuous shouting to produce any signs of life on the opposite bank, the chief's voice must have come in for a pretty considerable strain, but eventually three canoes of moderate size appeared, and the work of embarking our baggage was begun. Torday crossed in the first canoe. He was accompanied by a couple of the Bambala, who habitually acted as gun-bearers to us when out shooting,

but he took no arms with him of any kind, realising that the Bakongo were still highly suspicious of us, and that the sight of arms might provoke an attack or cause the boatmen to maroon him upon a sandbank in mid-stream, from which escape would be quite impossible unless the natives could be persuaded to return for him with a canoe. As I have said, the Loange at this point is about eight hundred yards wide. For the greater part of this distance the water is extremely shallow, so shallow indeed that paddles are never employed by the boatmen, the canoes being propelled by means of poles. There is, however, one portion of the river—about fifty yards in width—where the water is considerably deeper, and here the stream is so rapid that a canoe upon entering it from the more sluggish water is swept downwards with most alarming rapidity. For this reason any attempt to cross the Loange by means of swimming could only end in disaster, and as the width of the river rendered any kind of bridge impossible, we were entirely dependent upon the goodwill of the Bakongo boatmen. I watched Torday's canoe disappear between the bushes upon the eastern shore with my field-glasses, and I must confess that the minutes seemed like hours before I saw the canoe reappear and commence to cross the stream with the evident intention of ferrying over the remainder of our loads. The boatmen brought me a note from Torday informing me that everything had gone well and that all the loads which accompanied him had safely arrived in the forest on the far shore. This news came as a considerable relief to my feelings, for had any attempt been made to attack him we should have been quite unable to render any assistance.

The work of transporting all our goods across the river occupied several hours, but after a short time one of the canoes brought me over a second note from Torday saying that he had encountered two or three Bakongo women who had come down to fetch water, and that these had readily consented to carry some of our packages up to the village for a liberal wage, to be paid in salt. This was a highly satisfactory commencement to our journey, and when I myself came over the river with the last loads at about 5 P.M., I was delighted and not a little surprised to find that these worthy ladies had not only carried up the loads given to them, but had returned for more and brought other people with them, so that all our baggage had been removed to the village. We ourselves followed just as the sun was going down. The village in which we spent the night is called Insashi, like its neighbour on the left bank of the river; it lies on the edge of the forest belt at a distance of about a mile and a half from the water. It is quite a small place, and although, like all Bakongo villages, it is surrounded by a stockade, its defences were in a tumble-down condition, and except that it is the home of the boatmen who keep up communication with the outlying villages of the Bakongo on the western side of the river, the place appears to be of very little importance. We were well received by the aged chief. This man was an acquaintance of Dilonda, and evidently had accepted his statements as regards the inoffensive nature of our visit, for not only did he produce the present of chickens which is usually offered to the white man upon his arrival in a Congo village, but he assured us that his people would be willing to

convey our belongings to another village next day, and discussed quite freely with us the easiest route to the Kasai.

We found that here, as in the village upon the western shore, the natives in reality knew very little about their country beyond the radius of a few miles from their homes; in fact there was not one man in the whole village who had ever been as far as the Kasai. Here, too, the people spoke of Goman Vula as little as they could, and it was very clear to us that we should experience great difficulty in making acquaintance with this great chief.

The Loange River, however, lay behind us, and we had been so far very well received by the Bakongo, so that we really began to think that, even if we could not find Goman Vula, our journey across the unknown tract was likely to present fewer difficulties and dangers than we had expected. After spending one night at this second village of Insashi we proceeded about five or six miles in a south-south-easterly direction to Bwabwa, the people of Insashi eagerly offering their services as porters for the liberal wage of iron and knives which we agreed to pay them. As the whole of the country between the Loange and the Kasai was represented by a blank upon even the best maps of the Congo State, we had determined to do our best to make some sort of a rough survey of our route with the aid of a prismatic compass, and this work, commenced at Dumba, we now carried on as carefully as we possibly could. As we were unable to retrace our steps over any portion of the journey, we had to content ourselves with taking such bearings as we could while on the march from village to village. The map therefore which has resulted from our survey is by no means so



accurate or so complete as it would have been had we been able to devote some days to going out from each village to map the country round. It serves to show our route, however, and it is the best we could do under the circumstances, which were sometimes very trying.

The village of Bwabwa is a new one, and it lies in open country on the edge of the forest belt which borders the Loange River. As we approached the village we noticed two peculiar fetishes or charms. The first of these consisted in a miniature harpoon, a model of those used for trapping elephants and hippopotami, suspended over the path close to the entrance to the village. The second one consisted of a high post placed in the centre of the village, from the top of which hung creepers extended to each of the four corners of the stockade. This latter charm, I believe, was considered particularly efficacious against lightning. Dilonda accompanied us to Bwabwa, with the chief of which village he was very friendly, and upon his recommendation the natives received us well. We pitched our camp in the cleared ground outside the stockade and settled down to make ourselves agreeable. Upon hearing that we were hunters, the Bakongo at once suggested that we should on the morrow accompany them to the river and endeavour to shoot some of the buffalo which come down in the early morning to drink. Next day, therefore, we started before daybreak together with two or three of our Bambala and a few of the Bakongo, and having been ferried in a couple of very small canoes across the Loange, we spent several hours in a search for game. Although we were not successful in obtaining a shot, we found fresh tracks of

buffalo, elephant, hippopotami, bush-buck, and sitatunga in large quantities, so that this part of the Loange River must be considerably richer in game than most of the districts we passed through. We visited several grassy islands near to the western shore, and while doing so we came to the conclusion that we had been rather foolish in allowing the Bakongo to take us there, for should they have suddenly taken into their heads to get rid of us, nothing would have been easier than for them to depart in their canoes and thus maroon us upon the islands, from which, owing to the strength of the stream, escape would have been quite impossible. When we returned in safety to Bwabwa, therefore, we determined never again to place ourselves so completely at the mercy of a people who, although they were friendly at present, we certainly did not know sufficiently well to trust. Dilonda stayed a couple of nights at Bwabwa and then returned to his home across the river. He had certainly been most useful to us, for without his introduction I have no doubt that it would have taken many weeks for us to become friendly with the Bakongo upon either bank of the Loange, and in addition to this he had evidently talked a good deal about our clock-work elephant, for the natives of Bwabwa were very anxious to see it. We displayed it once to the chief, but we were very careful not to allow it to become "cheap" by showing it to any passing native who might express a desire to look at it. We first noticed at Bwabwa rather a curious thing about the Bakongo methods of hunting. Like the Bushongo they employ a number of dogs with rattles

strapped around them to drive small game into nets in the forest, but among the Bakongo the dogs, although belonging to various individuals, are all under the care of one man who occupies a position somewhat similar to that of the "kennel-huntsman" of an English fox-hound pack, and he daily feeds all the dogs used for hunting. Most of the Bakongo carry little wooden whistles suspended from a string around the neck, but the dogs appear to easily distinguish the note of the kennel-man's whistle, for they come round him as soon as he sounds it to partake of the cassava dough with which he feeds them. As a rule the dogs of the Bakongo appear to be very well kept.

In discussing our route with the people of Bwabwa it appeared that our next stage would be to a village named Bishwambura which lay about six miles to the eastwards, but the people of Bwabwa declined to carry our loads there, and insisted upon taking us to a small hamlet called Bwao, situated about three miles to the north. We were not in a position to insist upon going where we liked, so we had to be content with moving on to this place, although by going there we were moving very little, if any, further from the Loange than we were at present, and consequently were making practically no progress towards the Kasai, and were having to pay very high wages to the natives for carrying our loads these short and useless stages. From Bwao, however, we did manage to get on to Bompe, about four miles to the eastwards, having been warned by the people of Bwao to be very careful how we treated the Bakongo of Bompe, for we

were assured that the slightest carelessness on our part would probably lead to our being attacked.

We were, however, received in a most friendly spirit, our iron and knives evidently being most welcome to the natives. After the village of Bompe matters became more complicated, for there began to arise a difficulty as to the form which the payment of the Bakongo who carried for us should take. Living as they do exactly the same lives which the natives all over Africa used to live before the white man invaded the Dark Continent, the Bakongo have no real need for any article imported from Europe, with the exception of knives or the iron bars from which their smiths can forge arrow heads, and therefore every porter required to be paid either with a knife or a 4 lb. bar of iron for carrying a load even the shortest of stages. It will be understood, therefore, that our expenses were very heavy and that our limited stock of knives and iron should begin to dwindle to small proportions, it being quite impossible, now that the Loange lay behind us, to send a caravan back to Dumba for a further supply. Even at first when we were able to pay every one in the commodity he or she required, the work of getting the loads transported was no light task. As a rule the women were more eager to carry than the men; in fact I have often given a load to a stalwart Bakongo warrior only to see him transfer it immediately afterwards to the shoulders of his wife. But the Bakongo ladies were very trying to deal with when we distributed the packages in the morning preparatory to starting from a village; they all preferred a small heavy load to a bulky light one, and whenever a package could be divided between

several people the shrewd matrons would call in the services of all their children, often arriving at their destination with four or five individuals carrying portions of one load, and every one of these people expected to be paid the wage agreed upon for a full burden. I have known very small children to accompany us carrying a discarded empty bottle and demand payment at the end of the stage. Of course it was essential for us to keep our tempers and to humour the people as much as possible, otherwise we should doubtless have been unable to move at all, but I can assure my readers that it is by no means easy to remain unruffled when endeavouring to persuade a Bakongo lady to carry a certain package when she has determined in her own mind to carry another one.

One's most pleasant manner and most inviting smile (a sort of "do-take-this-one-it's-quite-light-really" grin) are quite thrown away on the Bakongo women. However, we tried our best to be agreeable, and the number of dirty infants whom we daily chucked under the chin with a view to ultimately securing their fond mothers' services as porters must have been very considerable. The fact that we could at first hardly speak a word of the local language did not make matters much easier, and altogether we were having a by no means enjoyable time during the early part of our journey from the Loange to the Kasai. The people of Bompe, in their anxiety to obtain iron, expressed their willingness to carry our loads on to Bishwambura; and realising that the natives would, in all probability, divide their loads up into small portions in the hope of obtaining full payment for each, Torday decided to go on to Bishwam-

bura in advance, with most of our Bambala porters carrying the iron and knives, there to await the arrival of our other baggage, while I was to remain at Bompe to superintend the departure of the loads, and to give to each porter who presented himself for service a slip of paper bearing my initials; upon handing this to Torday at Bishwambura he would receive the wage agreed upon. We thought that in this way we should be able to prevent the endless splitting up of loads, but it only served to give the Bakongo an opportunity of displaying a cunning that I should never have imagined that they possessed. It so happened that a green canvas sack, which contained a number of odds and ends left over from other packages, was torn at the corner, revealing inside a broken packet of Reckitt's blue (a dye which was very popular with the natives for ornamenting their faces). Now although they had never seen writing in any form before our arrival, the Bakongo conceived the idea of attempting to manufacture the vouchers for payment which I distributed to the porters. They picked up scraps of paper which had been left lying about our camping ground, and with the aid of a stick and Reckitt's blue they made marks upon them, fondly imagining that these marks would deceive Torday into paying them for carrying loads which existed really only in their imagination. Of course the trick was obvious at once, but Torday's refusal to pay for the forgeries caused the natives to mistrust the real vouchers which I had given them, with the result that many of them threw down their loads by the wayside and declined to carry them to Bishwambura. Torday sent back the Bambala porters to assist me to bring on the remainder of the

baggage, and wrote me a note requesting me to come on as soon as possible, and to have my rifle handy on the way, for he considered it highly probable that we should have trouble with the disappointed Bakongo. Our Bambala porters had always behaved in an exemplary manner during the time they had been with us, and their quiet, inoffensive manners had caused them to become popular in every village through which we had passed, but we had never before had such an opportunity of really testing them as during the march from Bompe to Bishwambura. When they left Bompe with me they were carrying heavy loads hung upon a pole between two men, but when we came to some packages abandoned by the wayside, they cut the loads away from the pole, and, one man taking what was really a burden for two, they picked up the boxes discarded by the Bakongo, and proceeded to stagger on with them towards Bishwambura before I had time even to hint to them that I wished this to be done. Our Bambala were always ready to voluntarily undertake any extra work, and to undergo any hardship which was necessary for the success of our journey, and it is owing to the fact that we were accompanied by such gallant and devoted followers that we were able to go through the trying times which were to follow.

When I arrived at Bishwambura I found Torday under a shed outside the stockade surrounded by an angry crowd of Bakongo all demanding payment for carrying loads, and it appeared very much as if a breach of the peace would follow his refusal to give everybody present a wage. He was adamant, however, and finally the people of Bompe returned home in the evening, grumbling and discontented,

leaving us to get on as best we could with the people of Bishwambura, whose acquaintance we had thus made under by no means favourable circumstances. It was not to be expected that they would be very friendly towards us, for they shared the dislike which all the other Bakongo felt towards the white man, and our dispute with the people of Bompe, although unavoidable, was hardly likely to make them particularly friendly towards us, so that we were not surprised to find ourselves treated once more in the same way as among the Bankutu of the equatorial forest. The people would sell us no chickens, and for some time declined to show us where to obtain good drinking water. Our men, however, soon found a clear stream, and we had purchased at Bompe a sufficient supply of living fowls to meet our immediate requirements, and as the Bakongo were not averse to selling food to the Bambala, our predicament was not a serious one. The chief difficulty lay in persuading the natives to carry us on to the next village. They flatly refused to take us over the rolling grassy plains which lay to the eastward, for they told us that a party of Badjok traders were encamped in a village in that direction, and that these Badjok, with whom the Bakongo were friendly, would not allow the white man to be brought anywhere near them. This struck us as rather remarkable, for we knew that the Badjok were enthusiastic traders, who like nothing better than to purchase goods imported from Europe and to sell ivory and rubber to the white man; we came to the conclusion, therefore, that this particular party of Badjok must be engaged in buying slaves from the Bakongo, for in the old days, before the arrival of the European Government,



these people were noted slave traders, and this unexplored country between the Loange and the Kasai would be one of the very few remaining places where they might be able to carry on this trade unpunished. After a good deal of discussion, the people of Bishwambura agreed to carry our loads on to Kanenenke, some three miles to the south, having previously ascertained that the natives of that village would be willing to allow us to visit them. Torday went on to Kanenenke in advance, leaving me to despatch our baggage with the local Bakongo. This stage of our journey passed off without any untoward incident, but when I joined Torday in the evening I found that he had had rather an amusing experience in the village on his arrival. Upon approaching the stockade he had found two elderly men sitting smoking their pipes beneath a shed; as soon as they set eyes upon him they had jumped up with a squeal, and, carefully keeping the shed between him and themselves, they had anxiously inquired whether he was a human being or a ghost. Torday had assured them, in as much of the Bakongo language as he had been able to learn during our stay in the country, that he was not only human, but really very inoffensive, and that he had brought with him a good supply of things which the Bakongo would like to have, and which he was quite prepared to give them in exchange for food and for their services as porters when we moved on. In the meantime, a number of other natives had assembled to look at him, but it took some little time to persuade them that he really belonged to this world, for I think that the Bakongo had imagined that a "white" man ought to resemble in colour the white earth, something like chalk,

which exists in small quantities in this district, so that Torday's tanned visage by no means came up to their expectations of a European. At last one man, more courageous than the rest, had touched him, and, having satisfied himself that Torday was nothing more than ordinary flesh and blood, had persuaded the others to lay aside their fears, so that when I arrived Torday had settled down and was making himself agreeable to the chief of the village. We stayed some days in Kanenenke, and got on remarkably well with the people there; we were able to take a great number of photographs, and, by dint of giving a few pinches of salt as a reward to those who posed for us, we had no difficulty in obtaining pictures, not only of native types, but of the people performing their various daily occupations. We took several photographs of ladies having their eyelashes pulled out, for no Bakongo lady of fashion would think of appearing with any hair upon her eyelids. The eyelashes are pulled out by another woman so quickly and so neatly that the process does not so much as bring water to their eyes. It was at first somewhat disquieting to observe that after sundown there was scarcely a sober man to be found at Kanenenke, for the Bakongo are extremely fond of palm wine, in connection with the drinking of which there is a curious custom among them. Several times, when entering Bakongo villages, we noticed, at some little distance from the villages themselves, two or three logs placed as if to form seats by the wayside, and we were considerably astonished to find that these marked the meeting-places of clubs. In the evening the Bakongo men come out to bring in the wine extracted from the Elais palm, and they carry it



GANDU, SON OF THE CHIEF OF KANEXENKE.



REMOVING A LADY'S EYELASHES.



in calabashes to these meeting-places, where groups of friends, to the number of half-a-dozen or a dozen, sit down, smoke their pipes, and drink while discussing the local gossip.

The habits of the Bakongo at their clubs are certainly not so temperate as they might be, but we soon found that as a rule they were, when drunk, more agreeable and more anxious to please us than when sober, so that although for the first few days we were rather uncertain as to what their demeanour towards us might be when the liquor got into them, we soon came to regard the existence of these clubs as rather a help than a hindrance to our progress. At Kanenkenke our men were often invited to partake of refreshment by the natives, and on one or two occasions we ourselves were offered a drink by some convivial spirit when we passed the clubs on our way back from shooting guinea-fowls in the evening. Although palm wine is generally drunk out of quaintly carved wooden cups, in the manufacture of which the Bakongo are quite the equal of the Bushongo, it is very often imbibed from leaves neatly twisted up so as to contain the liquid, the same leaf never being used for two drinks. The natives in most parts of the Kasai district are in the habit of thus drinking water from leaves when they cross a stream upon the march. During our stay at Kanenkenke, although the fact that the little children displayed no timidity in visiting our camp and playing with us clearly showed that we were becoming even popular with the natives, our chances of reaching the Kasai began to appear remarkably small. It seemed that nothing save iron and knives would induce the Bakongo to carry for us, and our

stock of these commodities was almost at an end. We possessed a fair amount of salt, which the natives would accept in payment for small services, and also a quantity of European cotton material, but this latter proved merely an encumbrance to us, for we learned that Goman Vula had issued a decree announcing that any one of his subjects found wearing material of European manufacture would be instantly put to death. We could hardly expect, therefore, that the Bakongo would carry for us for a wage to be paid in cloth.

In addition to this, the people of Kanenenke informed us that they and the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages had had a difference of opinion with Goman Vula, which, if it had not grown to an open revolt, had at least put a stop to any intercourse between the natives of the district in which we now were and the Bakongo who inhabited the immediate neighbourhood of Goman Vula's village. The people of Kanenenke plainly told us that, for this reason, they could not themselves transport our baggage to the village of the great chief. This story may very likely have been a lie invented for the purpose of keeping us away from Goman Vula, for the natives were as mysterious as ever when discussing him, and we could not find any one who would say that he knew him personally; but, whether true or false, it seemed highly improbable that we should either be able to meet Goman Vula or to make our way towards the Kasai. We were bitterly disappointed, for we had gone to considerable expense in making our way as far as Kanenenke, and at Kanenenke itself we were getting on with the natives better than we had any right to expect that we

should, so that Torday was collecting quite an amount of valuable information concerning the manners and customs of the tribe. In addition to this, we were particularly anxious to cross this unknown track, a feat which had been attempted unsuccessfully so often before. We were convinced that the whole matter was now merely a question of money. Had we possessed unlimited iron and knives we could doubtless have bribed the Bakongo to take us anywhere we liked, but such heavy material in large quantities would have necessitated our bringing with us a very large number of porters, for it would be quite impossible to trust the Bakongo themselves to transport loads consisting of the objects which they covet so much; and had we been followed by a large number of natives from the Kwilu, the Bakongo of the river bank would certainly have been so suspicious of us that they would never have ferried us over the Loange. Had it been possible to employ some other means of transport, such as, for instance, donkeys, I am convinced that we should have been able to bring in sufficient iron and knives to bribe the natives into taking us to Goman Vula's village, and probably to succeed in establishing friendly relations with the great chief himself. Although our chances of being able to reach the Kasai certainly seemed very remote, we could not bear to turn back and recross the Loange, so that when the people of Kanenenke began to talk about carrying our loads on for one more stage, we decided to risk finding ourselves at an end of our supply of currency, and to proceed as far in an easterly direction as we possibly could. We made great friends with the chief of Kanenenke, a fine, stalwart old native, who was in the habit of smoking

a pipe, the stem of which was so long that he required a slave to light it for him, and with his son Gandu, another fine specimen of a negro, with whom we used to take short shooting excursions in search of guinea-fowl. During these excursions we came across many of the hidden plantations of the Bakongo, for on the march in their country one sees little or no land under cultivation, the fields generally lying some distance from any main track, hidden in patches of woodland. The chief and his son were very greatly impressed by our clock-work elephant.

During our stay in the village Gandu's wife presented him with a son, whereupon the young warrior at once came round to see us, and, calling Torday aside, asked him if he would allow our elephant to predict the future of the child. This Torday agreed to do, and, having previously ascertained by his researches among the people that Gandu's son would be heir to the chieftainship, and seeing that the baby was a healthy one, he told the proud father that the elephant foresaw that the child would grow up into a strong man and become the chief of a village. This was a fairly safe prophecy, for if the child lived he would certainly become chief, and there appeared to be no prospect of its dying, at any rate for the next few days, after which we hoped we should be many miles away from Kanenenke. At any rate the prediction thoroughly delighted Gandu, and he offered himself to act as an envoy from us to the people of Kenge, the next village to the eastwards, if we would send with him one of our men, Mayuyu, with whom he had struck up a great friendship. Mayuyu at once expressed his willingness to go, so he and Gandu started off one morning to assure the



people of Kenge of our peaceful intentions, and to ask them if they had any objection to our visiting them. During their absence we had little to do, for Gandu was our chief informant upon all matters connected with his tribe in which we were interested, so we spent a good deal of our time in playing with the children. While thus employed Torday one day showed the little ones how to blow an egg. This was regarded by all the assembled natives as a truly wonderful performance, so we threaded a piece of cotton through the empty shell and hung it up to a tree close to our tents, where it was evidently regarded as a fetish, and accordingly avoided by all passing natives. In an empty granary just beside the entrance to my tent a Bakongo fetish of a very different kind was hanging; it was a human thigh-bone; but although this was rather gruesome, and was no doubt believed to possess considerable magical powers, I think that our clockwork elephant and our egg-shell were regarded as something far more uncanny than any charm which the natives themselves possessed, so that we felt quite safe in leaving our goods about in the shed, where we passed the greater part of our time, and in going to rest at night without troubling to post sentries over our belongings.

After a couple of days' absence Gandu and Mayuyu returned and informed us that the people of Kenge had expressed their willingness to receive our visit, and, in fact, had appeared quite anxious to see us. Kenge, Gandu told us, lay at no great distance from Goman Vula's village, so he thought that it was quite possible we might be able to persuade its inhabitants to take us on to see the great chief.

Knowing the state of our finances as regards iron and knives, however, we ourselves were very doubtful upon this point. Early in the morning, after the return of our envoys, Torday proceeded to Kenge, all the inhabitants of Kanenenke and of one or two neighbouring hamlets turning out to carry our loads, but although every one appeared anxious to act as porters, we were unable to secure sufficient people to remove all our baggage from the village in one day. Accordingly I stayed behind with the remainder of the baggage to await the return of our Bambala, whom Torday promised to send back as soon as they were refreshed after their journey. The way to Kenge occupied about seven hours, so that I had to spend two nights at Kanenenke before our porters had had time to rest and to return for me. They brought with them a note from Torday informing me that he had been received in a friendly fashion by two chiefs who held equal sway at Kenge, and that these worthies had given him a present of fowls. He said that he had told the natives that our stock of iron was practically at an end, but that this fact did not appear to prejudice them against us. I was somewhat relieved to get this information, for the night before I left Kanenenke the Bakongo, who had returned from carrying our loads with Torday, had appeared much less friendly in their manner towards me; and I gathered from what I could pick up from the remarks I heard made at a mass meeting held after nightfall within the village that they were dissatisfied with their pay, evidently expecting to be able to extort from Torday quite twice the amount that had been agreed upon as their wages.

Just as I was leaving the village, the chief came to

me and formally requested me to remove the eggshell which I had inadvertently left hanging upon its tree. The people evidently imagined that this charm could have some effect upon them even after our departure if left in their village. I therefore carefully removed it and started upon my journey. The way to Kenge lay, after passing through a narrow strip of woodland close to Kanenenke, over great rolling, grassy downs, almost devoid of trees, and it was only after covering about eighteen miles of a winding road that we came upon any woodland, and then only a narrow strip bordering a brook a mile or so from Kenge. At Kenge we were only about twenty miles as the crow flies from the Loange River, and the country had consisted almost entirely of undulating plains, although to the north of Kenge very extensive woodlands could be seen, and, of course, near to the Loange patches of forest are to be found in the numerous hollows, through which flow little streams. On the whole the country here must be said to consist of plains, and in no way resembles the impenetrable forest which we had been told we should find between the Loange and the Kasai. Upon reaching Kenge I found Torday installed under a shed about forty yards from the stockade which surrounded the village. His tent was pitched a few yards away, and mine was quickly erected close beside it. Between the shed and the village the ground had been cleared of grass, and was covered with cassava bushes about four or five feet in height. A few yards away from our tents lay the rough grass of the plains. Torday was talking to several natives, including the two chiefs, when I

arrived, and all these came forward to welcome me. We noticed, however, that they looked in some surprise on the loads which our Bambala were carrying, which consisted merely of a few odd and ends. A short time after I had joined Torday and we were sitting down to a meal, one of the chiefs, an evil-looking ruffian with a squint, came to speak to us, and it was evident that his friendly attitude towards us had changed to one of insolence. He and his people had previously told Torday that they would not expect to be paid in iron for carrying us on to the next village, for they had been assured that our stock of iron and knives was nearly at an end, but now he came and informed us that his people would not carry our loads until they had received a high wage in iron; nothing else would satisfy them. Torday once more informed them that it was quite impossible for us to accede to these demands, whereupon the chief remarked, "Very well, you can go; if you have no iron, we do not want you here." Torday then told him that we asked nothing better than to go, and that if his people would carry our loads for us at daybreak on the morrow, we should be delighted to leave his village and continue our journey towards the Kasai. The chief again assured us that his people would not carry without iron; and when we remarked that we could not move until they carried for us, he said, "You must go as best you can yourselves; we will have iron, or we will have war." With that he left us.

We learned later on that this, the elder of the two chiefs, rather fancied himself as a wizard, and doubtless intended to show off his magical powers before his people

by frightening us out of his village. After a time he returned and told us that as a declaration of war he intended to steal the chickens which he had just presented to us. We showed him where they lay, and he thereupon took them, our people, acting under our order, making no effort to prevent him, for we did not wish to force on hostilities by any act of violence on our part. For the rest of the evening no one came near us, and it was noticeable that the women and children kept within the stockade, while the warriors, who had previously been walking about unarmed, most of them now carried their bows and arrows when they passed our camp. Our position was by no means a comfortable one. I have mentioned that the shed in which our belongings lay and our tents were closely surrounded by cassava bushes, under cover of which it would be very easy for a native to creep up unobserved and shoot us as we sat in our chairs; obviously any attempt on our part to clear the ground by cutting down their crops could only result in the Bakongo immediately attacking us. Our camp was situated well within arrow-range of the stockade, and although the shed beneath which we were sitting would doubtless keep out any arrows shot from the village, which at a distance of forty yards would already be beginning to drop, we and our men would certainly be very much exposed at any time that we left its shelter. Any attempt at removing our camp to the plains, a little farther away from the village, would only have been mistaken for flight, and would have induced the Bakongo to attack us immediately. The only thing to do was to stay

where we were, to avoid any act of aggression, and to appear as unconcerned as possible. We summoned our Bambala porters and now informed them for the first time that the two long cases which we carried with us contained ten rifles; for up to this moment we had kept our people in ignorance of the fact that we possessed any arms except our own sporting guns. Upon seeing the rifles, our trusty Bambala suggested that, instead of issuing these arms to them, we ourselves should endeavour to shoot such of the Bakongo as carried most arrows directly hostilities began, so that our people, covered by our firing, might rush up and take the weapons of the slain, and so be provided with arms in the use of which they were practised, instead of the rifles with which they had never learned to shoot. This we decided to attempt as soon as any hostile move was made by the enemy. Our Bambala porters then proceeded to dress their hair with oil, and to smear their countenances with Reckitt's blue, and, thus beautified, waited calmly for the trouble to begin. At this crisis, as always, our men behaved in a most exemplary manner, never causing us a moment's anxiety as to their loyalty, and never complicating affairs by an aggressive act or word to the Bakongo. That night we loaded all our guns before we put them by our bedsides, and we placed in readiness two boxes of rockets usable in a 12-bore shot-gun, which, although they were incapable of inflicting any damage, we thought might possibly strike terror into the hearts of the Bakongo. After we had turned in we heard a meeting being held within the village, at which several speakers held forth at great

length, but although we could just make out that war was the subject of discussion, we could not hear sufficiently well to gather any information as to what the natives intended to do. We fully expected to be attacked that night, but, as a matter of fact, the Bakongo never left their village until morning, and then no one approached our camp. The women and children still kept out of sight, and we noticed that all of the men carried arms, and many of them were busily occupied in putting new tips or feathers upon their arrows, in manufacturing new bows, or in paring down stout creepers with which to make bow-strings. Our porters had purchased a good deal of food upon arriving at Kenge when the natives were friendly, so we told them on no account to accept any eatables from the Bagongo should they offer any for sale, for we feared that some attempt might be made to poison them; for ourselves we had plenty of European stores, so that for the time being we had no need to bother about our food supply. But the outlook was not a particularly bright one, for it was evident that the Bakongo, if they did not attack us, would certainly attempt to starve us out, and we should therefore be eventually compelled to retreat towards the Loange, in which case it was practically certain that we should find that the people of Kenge had caused the inhabitants of the villages through which we had passed previously to rise against us upon our return journey, and we should therefore be compelled to fight our way to the Loange with only twenty-four men, many of whom would be occupied in transporting the objects which we had already bought

for the Museum; for we were firmly determined that, even if we had to abandon the rest of our baggage, we would do our best to bring away the things which we had procured at a cost of so much trouble and expense. Even if we could succeed in reaching the Loange River, we were sure that the natives would have concealed all the canoes, so that our plight by the riverside would hardly be better than it was at Kenge. During the day, possibly as a result of advice given by some speaker at the over-night assembly in the village, the Bakongo proceeded to *clear away the cassava bushes* around our camp. A worse piece of strategy could hardly be imagined, for whereas the bushes had offered perfect cover for any one who wished to creep up and shoot at us as we sat at meals or writing in our shed, now that they had been removed we had an open space around us, in which we should be able to do some damage with our sporting rifles. Their removal appeared to us to render our danger far less imminent. Another night passed and we were not molested. Upon the following morning Torday considered that the time had arrived for putting our clockwork elephant to the test, and to exhibit some little black dolls which we had received from London during our last stay at Dima.

He accordingly tied one of the dolls in a prominent position upon the ridge pole of his tent, and we soon observed that its presence had been noticed by the Bakongo. As a rule, when a native is really impressed by anything that he thinks may be of a supernatural character, he disguises his feelings, and does not exhibit the great curiosity with







BAKONGO OF KENGE LOOKING AT OUR DOLL.



THE CLOCKWORK ELEPHANT.

which he usually views any strange thing the white man may show him, and we saw that the Bakongo were extremely shy of our little "medicine," as we called our doll, for no crowd collected round it, but nearly every one in the place must have had a look at it from a distance, each one soon passing on silently and with a puzzled expression on his face.

Later on we saw the second chief of the village loitering near our camp. This man had always appeared to us to be less inclined for war than his colleague, the old wizard, so Torday called out to him to come and talk matters over with us. After a little hesitation he came. Torday explained to him that although we did not want war, we were by no means afraid of it, and showed the chief our guns. We also related a few shooting stories, not all of them, perhaps, strictly true, in which we dwelt upon the enormous number of buffalo, &c., that daily fell to our rifles when we took the trouble to go out shooting; and Torday gave the man to understand that the presence of a great fetish was responsible for our success in the use of our guns. The chief could not suppress his curiosity as to the nature of this "fetish," and Torday, after pretending that he scarcely dared to worry it by introducing strangers, finally agreed to show it to him. He entered his tent, and wound up the clock-work elephant, while I remained outside with the chief. At a word from Torday I drew back the flap and gently pushed the native in. The elephant began to move. One glance at the little toy walking along the top of a gun-case, waving its trunk in the semi-darkness of the tent, was sufficient for the chief; with a gasp of fear he sprang backward through

the tent door and attempted to bolt. We insisted upon his having another look, but it was a very brief one, and crying, "I will bring you back those chickens we have stolen," the old man rushed off to the village as hard as his legs would carry him. A stir was immediately noticeable among the Bakongo, and after some delay a party of them came over to us, bringing with them the stolen fowls. Torday then gave a discourse upon the might of our "elephant," but declined to disturb it again to satisfy their curiosity; he informed the people, however, that it never slept, so that any attempt to surprise us could only result in rousing it to anger, with horrible consequences to the offenders. He then proceeded to set fire to a little whisky, which, in the darkness, the natives of course mistook for water, and remarked that the local rivers would blaze up finely if once we took it into our heads to burn them.

The effect of our game of bluff upon the people of Kenge was greater than we could ever have hoped it would be. The attitude of the Bakongo towards us immediately changed. I do not mean to say that their hostility changed to friendliness, but their desire to attack us, or to starve us out, gave way to a wish to get rid of us as soon as possible without arousing the anger of our "fetish." Upon the day following the exhibition of our elephant we found the people quite ready to discuss with us the possibility of our moving on to another village, and the once truculent chief now informed us that his people would be perfectly willing to carry our loads on to the village of Makasu, some eight miles as the crow flies to the north-east, but, bearing in mind the fact that news travels quickly in Africa, we were anxious to

ascertain whether or not the inhabitants of this latter place would be willing to receive us, after having heard, as doubtless they already had, of the magical powers which we were believed to possess. The chief of Kenge offered to send one of his men as an envoy to them, and Mayuyu, who had performed the same office for us before our journey from Kanenenke, suggested that he should accompany him. These two accordingly set out for Makasu, and returned in the evening with the information that the people there, who we now learned for the first time were Bashilele, were quite willing to receive our visit.

We stayed on two or three more days at Kenge, however, employing our time in taking photographs, for the natives were much too frightened of our elephant to object to our wandering freely about, and using our cameras as much as we liked. We learned now that the reason for the hostility of the Bakongo was that, although they knew that Torday had brought little or no iron with him, they had always hoped that upon my arrival a further supply of that commodity would appear, and it was their disappointment, when they found that I had nothing with me that they wanted, which caused their friendly attitude to change to one of insolent aggression. During the period of strained relationship with the natives which I have just described, Torday and I were both of us confident that, in the event of hostilities, we should be able to retrace our steps to the Loange, even if considerably harassed on the way; but when I look back upon the incident, I do not think that, had the Bakongo decided to attack us, and to raise the western villages against us, we should any of us have had the slightest

chance of reaching the river alive. I think, therefore, that it is not too much to claim for the clock-work toy that it prevented a massacre. It is possible that some of my readers may have imagined that we contemplated swindling the natives when I stated that we were prepared to sell one of our elephants for some very valuable curio, but I think the events at Kenge should prove that the toy possessed a very real value for the native, and my readers can easily imagine how much the possession of it would increase the prestige of any chief to whom we sold one. By our use of the elephant we were certainly taking advantage of the negro's ignorance and superstition, but as this course assuredly prevented bloodshed, I think that we were fully justified in adopting it. Our envoys having been welcomed at Makasu, we despatched all but three or four of our Bambala porters in the very early hours of one morning to carry some of our loads on to that village, ordering them to return as soon as possible, leaving two or three of their number on guard over the baggage. From what Mayuyu had told us of the distance to Makasu, we concluded that our men should have returned to Kenge by about 11 o'clock in the morning, but it was not until sundown that they turned up. During these long hours of waiting we endured an agony of suspense. I have already mentioned that we had been informed of the presence in the neighbourhood of a party of Badjok traders, and that we had considered it highly probable that these people were engaged in the purchase of slaves. Knowing them to be well armed and warlike, we began to fear that our porters had encountered them and had been captured, to be hurried off southwards, and sold in the neighbourhood of the

Angola frontier. Such a possibility filled us with horror, for we had a very real affection for our gallant followers from the Kwilu, and we realised that, had they been taken prisoners, we should be absolutely powerless to rescue them, although we were fully determined to start off in pursuit of the Badjok should we learn that our men had been taken. Such a pursuit should have been futile, for we could not expect any assistance from the Bakongo, and the Badjok would certainly march faster than we could follow. Our feelings, however, were so strong upon the subject that I have no doubt we should have attempted it. Our relief when our men turned up safe and sound knew no bounds. It appears that, having started in the darkness of the early morning under the guidance of Mayuyu, who had only once traversed the road to Makasu, the Bambala had lost their way in some woodland, and had taken many hours to reach Makasu, proceeding by a very circuitous route. Upon their arrival, however, the Bashilele had received them kindly, and had offered them food and water, expressing their desire to see us in their village as soon as we could come along. Next day, therefore, we turned our backs on Kenge, and proceeded into the country of the Bashilele. I went on in advance, while Torday remained at Kenge until all the loads had been despatched. Shortly after leaving the village I came upon quite a considerable river, known to the natives as the Lumbunji, which is here about sixty yards in width, with a very strong stream. From what we could gather from the natives, this river must rise somewhere near to, or just to the south of, the Angola boundary, and it flows parallel to the Loange, entering the Kasai a little to

the eastward of that river. For a few miles from its confluence with the Kasai it is navigable for canoes, but at Kenge the stream is too strong and the river much too littered up with fallen trees to render the use of boats possible. A rough bridge of logs had existed across it on the way from Kenge to Makasu, but this had recently been destroyed by the Bakongo, evidently with the intention of cutting off our retreat to the eastwards, so that I had to waste some time on the march while our Bambala felled saplings and reconstructed the bridge.

Upon arriving at Makasu I found all the inhabitants squatting in the shed beneath the ramparts of the village awaiting my arrival. Not one man was armed, and I, of course, carefully avoided arousing any suspicion by appearing in the village with a rifle in my hands or with a gun-bearer close beside me. The chief greeted me, and took me to a shed outside the walls where the loads we had despatched the day before had been deposited. Here I awaited the arrival of the Bakongo, who were bringing on our belongings from Kenge. They had agreed to accept wages in salt for this service, but I fully anticipated that some trouble might arise over their payment. To my astonishment, however, they accepted the amount of salt agreed upon without a murmur, and by dint of throwing in a few additional handfuls of that useful commodity to the portions of one or two women who had volunteered to carry loads, and by giving a little here and there as presents to children who accompanied their mothers, I managed to send the majority of the Bakongo back to their homes smiling and contented. One of our boxes had been broken



open on the way. That box contained the clock-work elephant! The two Bakongo who were carrying it had turned over some cloth which they found upon opening the lid, in the hope that there might be some iron or knives concealed beneath it, and what their feelings were when they discovered that they had disturbed the dreaded elephant I cannot imagine. At any rate they deposited it at Makasu and started off for home at a run, without waiting a moment to receive the payment which I should have been perfectly willing to give them. Torday came on just before sundown, accompanied by the Bambala, who had that day accomplished the journey from Kenge twice. An incident occurred during this march which serves to show the lack of forethought of the negro. Realising that our men had a hard day's work before them, Torday had in the morning issued orders that they should partake of a hearty meal before starting upon their first journey, and that they should carry a little food with them on the way. When he arrived in Makasu all the Bambala excepting one (Moamba, the youth who had joined us at Luano), accompanied him, and, imagining that he had stopped to wash himself at some stream, the lad's absence at first caused us no anxiety, but when three or four hours later he had not put in an appearance, we feared that he must have been molested by the Bakongo, or that some accident might have happened to him. Several of his companions at once volunteered to return along the road in search of him, and, taking one of our camp lanterns, they set out. After some time they returned, bringing with them Moamba, who was in a very exhausted condition. We gave him a good dose of whisky

and water, which we had some difficulty in making him drink, and some food, and then inquired what had happened to him. "Hunger seized me," replied the boy, "so I lay down in the forest." When asked what he thought was going to happen to him there, he said that he did not know. He then informed us that he had forgotten to eat anything before starting out in the morning, despite our orders that the men were to partake of a hearty breakfast, and apparently had thrown away the food he had brought with him for the journey. When he began to feel weak from the effects of hunger he had ceased to care in the least what happened to him. A day or two's rest at Makasu, however, soon set him on his feet again, and he was quite strong by the time we were ready to move on to the next village.

## CHAPTER IX

### AMONG THE BASHILELE

UPON quitting Kenge we left the country of the Bakongo, leaving behind us all serious difficulties in our journey from the Loange to the Kasai. The Bashilele of Makasu were remarkably friendly; they were dignified in their manner towards us, and although, when we showed them the clock-work elephant, they were evidently much impressed by it, we could clearly see that the natives were by no means afraid of us. They had expressed their willingness to receive us and to treat us well, and so long as we refrained from any sort of aggression towards them, it was evidently their intention to let us pass freely through their country. While staying in this village we gathered a certain amount of information about the Bashilele and the Bakongo. These peoples are in reality two divisions of the same tribe, both of them owing allegiance to the same great chief, Goman Vula. From various unmistakable pieces of evidence to be found in their culture, Torday has been able to definitely establish the fact that the inhabitants of the country between the Loange and the Kasai are an offshoot of the great Bushongo nation, as he had so strongly suspected after his researches at the Mushenge. He found that many of the mythical heroes of the Bushongo were well known to the Bashilele, and the use of a divining instrument in the shape

of a crocodile, exactly similar to that in use among the Bushongo, as well as similarity in the shape of their houses, are examples of some of the points which indicate the close relationship between these peoples. With regard to Goman Vula, we learned that his village lies two days' march to the north of Makasu. It is, of course, difficult to estimate how many miles this represents, for the only means that the native possesses of indicating the length of a journey is to show the point in the heavens at which the sun would be when the traveller arrived at his destination were he to start at dawn. We roughly calculated the probable distance from Makasu to Goman Vula's capital at about fifty miles by the track, but as the crow flies the distance would most likely be considerably shorter. In displaying our elephant at Makasu we were careful to explain that by nature our "fetish" was peaceful, and that only when any violence was offered to us or to our followers would it cause harm to befall the natives through whose country we were travelling, and this explanation seemed to set the minds of the natives completely at rest with regard to the peaceful nature of our visit. During the two or three days that we spent in this village resting after the excitements of Kenge, we were several times taken out in search of guinea-fowl by the Bashilele, who seemed quite ready to do anything that we asked them, and who were very much astonished at seeing birds shot on the wing. We discovered that the rumours we had heard of the presence of the Badjok traders in the district had been quite true, for we found outside Makasu a group of the temporary grass shelters which these people erect when travelling, for it appears that they do not as a



A BADJOK CAMP AT MAKASU.



BASHILELE HUNTERS.



rule reside in the villages which they visit. This encampment had been only recently deserted, and we learned that its inhabitants had been engaged solely in collecting rubber, to be subsequently sold to the white traders on the Kasai, so that our fears for the safety of our porters had in reality been quite unfounded. We could not learn much from the Bashilele of Makasu with regard to the number of stages which we should have to march before reaching the Kasai, but they agreed to carry our loads to another village, also called Makasu, about ten miles to the south-east, where they said we should be able to obtain more precise information. Our way lay beside the course of a brook named the Miloa, a tributary of the Lumbunji, in the swamps around the course of which we found many fresh tracks of elephants.

Our reception at the second village of Makasu was as friendly as at the first. Torday explained to the natives that our only desire was to reach our homes, and in order to do this it was necessary for us to proceed to one of the factories of the Kasai Company upon the shores of the Kasai, of the existence of which the people of this village had heard. But the chief of the second village of Makasu appeared by no means anxious for us to leave at once, so we willingly settled down to spend a few days in his village, where we could enjoy a splendid opportunity of studying the daily life of a people among whom European influence has not yet begun to be felt. Every village between the Loange and the Kasai appears to be entirely self-supporting; every man manufactures his own garments, weaving the cloth from palm fibre in the same way as do the Bushongo;

accompanied by his dogs, he participates in hunting expeditions, supplying his family with meat from his share of the game, and the Bashilele as hunters are far superior to their kinsmen around the Mushenge; he makes his own bows, bow-strings, and the shafts of his arrows, while he forms and decorates with carving the wooden cups from which he drinks his palm wine; his wives cultivate sufficient land to supply the family needs with cassava; his children tend his chickens and goats. In fact, the only things which a man must buy, being unable to make them for himself, are iron objects, such as arrow and spear-heads, knives, and bracelets, all of which are the work of the village blacksmith, who is paid for them in meat, fowls, food stuffs, or palm cloth.

When not engaged in hunting, clearing the ground for plantations, or in the manufacture of cloth, the Bashilele men lead a life of complete idleness, smoking green tobacco in carved wooden pipes in the sheds or beneath the shade of the palm-trees outside the village walls. Early in the morning a little cassava dough is eaten, and the women go forth to work in the fields, returning in the evening to pound the cassava root into flour, and to cook the evening meal. Such is the daily life of a people upon whom European civilisation has as yet made not the slightest impression. So little do the Bashilele wander beyond the immediate surroundings of their own homes, that very few of the inhabitants of any village are acquainted with the track even to the next settlement of their own tribe; and we found in travelling through their country that often, even when carrying our loads to another Bashilele village, the men would arm as if for war—that is to say, they



would take with them from twenty to thirty arrows with their bows, instead of the two or three habitually carried. The Bashilele, like the Bakongo, are a fine, stalwart race of men. They use a good deal of tukula in the ornamentation of their persons, and their hair is usually carefully dressed in a high topknot—a point in which they differ from the Bakongo, who usually plait their hair closely upon their heads. By nature they are peaceful, and by no means live up to the terrible reputation with which they have been endowed by white men who have never visited their country; but at the same time the Bashilele are born warriors, and any act of aggression on the part of the traveller would be instantly and energetically resented. During our stay at the second village of Makasu, an incident occurred which showed us that the Bashilele are always ready to defend their homes. We were sitting one afternoon in a shed amusing ourselves, and considerably astonishing the natives, with the intellectual pastime of blowing soap bubbles through a straw, when a woman ran up from the fields to the village, shouting and gesticulating wildly as she ran. In a moment the men, who had been occupied at their looms, or sitting smoking in the shade of the palm-trees, had sprung to their feet and rushed inside the stockade, to reappear in a moment or two armed to the teeth, some thrusting bundles of arrows into their girdles, others twisting spare bowstrings round their heads, and all shouting at the top of their voices, many of them giving utterance to the Bashilele war-cry. All the women then began to hurry in from their work in the plantations and sought shelter within the walls, at the same time shouting

to the men, and evidently inciting them to attack some enemy whom we had not yet seen. One of our men then came and informed us that a party of Badjok traders were approaching the village, and that the Bashilele had decided to attack them. Hearing an increased commotion upon the farther side of the village, Torday and I hurried round to see what was going on, and, upon turning the corner of the stockade, a truly remarkable sight presented itself. The Bashilele, yelling at the tops of their voices and dancing up and down in a frenzy of excitement, were surrounding three or four of the Badjok, stretching their bows at them, and threatening them with instant death. The Badjok, who consisted of one man, armed with a flintlock gun, and two or three small boys carrying baskets, stood in the midst of their enemies without making the smallest attempt to defend themselves, and without displaying the slightest trace of fear; they did not even appear to be in the very least excited, but stood there, while the Bashilele aimed at them at a distance of only a few feet, as calmly as if they had been in their own village. One small boy had already been seized by the Bashilele and carried off as a prisoner within the stockade. Torday began to inquire what was the cause of this sudden outburst on the part of the people of Makasu, but all that the Bashilele would reply was, "They will set fire to the grass and frighten away the game from our country, so we are going to shoot the whole lot of them." Torday thereupon attempted to calm down the excitement, and one or two of the older Bashilele who were present cried out to their friends to listen to what he had to say. He

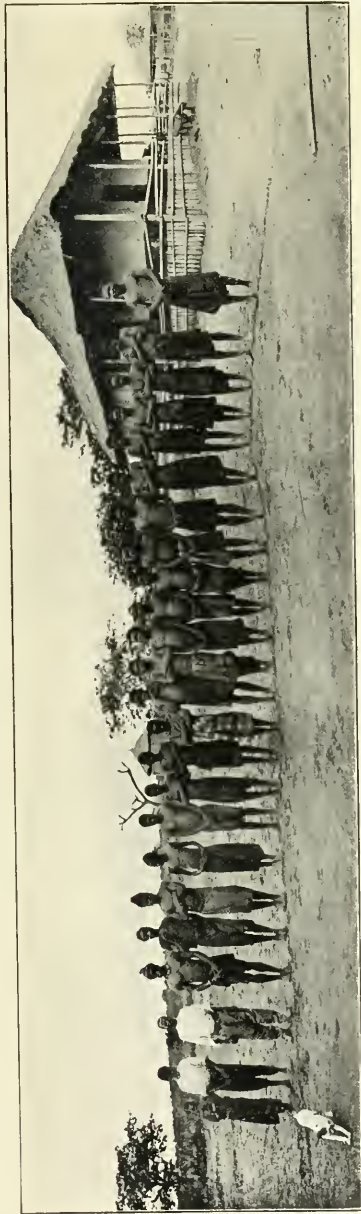
remarked that we were very averse to bloodshed, and that he hoped, out of friendship for us, the Bashilele would refrain from any breach of the peace; he told the villagers that should the Badjok attempt to set fire to the grass we ourselves would punish them; and finally, he chaffed the Bashilele warriors for turning out in such force to attack the few small children whom we saw before us. While he was speaking, the Bashilele assumed a less threatening attitude towards the intruders, and when he had finished they accompanied us and the Badjok to our shed to discuss what should be done; but the arrival of another party of Badjok gave rise to a further demonstration on the part of the villagers, and it seemed probable that all our efforts to prevent a massacre would be of no avail. During the whole of these proceedings the Bashilele women never ceased to scream from inside the stockade, and cry out to their warriors to immediately commence hostilities, while one or two of the older women came out of the gates armed with large knives, with the evident intention of despatching any of the Badjok who might not be killed outright. When matters seemed at their worst the chief of Makasu appeared upon the scene for the first time, and, remarking that he alone was chief and intended to be obeyed, he requested his subjects to keep quiet, and to listen to what Torday had to say. Then began a long discussion. The chief pointed out that the Badjok had come into the country uninvited, and would in all probability completely ruin the hunting of the district by carelessly or intentionally setting fire to the grass in the plains, and that this would mean a serious loss of meat to the Bashilele. The leader of the Badjok party

(most of which consisted of small boys accompanied by some half-dozen men armed with flintlock guns) then informed us that they came from far away to the southward from Angola, and were engaged in collecting rubber and ivory for sale at the white man's factories on the upper Kasai, and that, having made their fortunes at this occupation, they would return to their homes. He pointed out that the Bashilele themselves had no use for the rubber (they never sold it to the white man), and that he and his party invariably paid liberal prices for any food-stuffs which they obtained from the local natives; he assured us that all the Badjok were friends of the white man, and that they had no intention of causing any harm to any one. After a good deal of talk on both sides it was finally agreed that the Badjok should be allowed to depart peacefully upon payment of tribute to the chief, and the Bashilele warriors thereupon dispersed to their various occupations as if nothing at all unusual had occurred. Torday remained in the village to make sure that no attempt to follow the strangers should be made, while I escorted the Badjok off the premises, impressing upon them the necessity for extreme care in avoiding an accidental conflagration in the plains, and telling them that should the Bashilele again decide to attack them, we should be powerless to prevent it. Torday expressed his thanks to the Bashilele chief and people for the courteous way in which they had deferred to his wishes when he asked them to abstain from an attack, and he handed them over a sack of salt to be distributed among the people as a present to mark his appreciation of their behaviour. During the

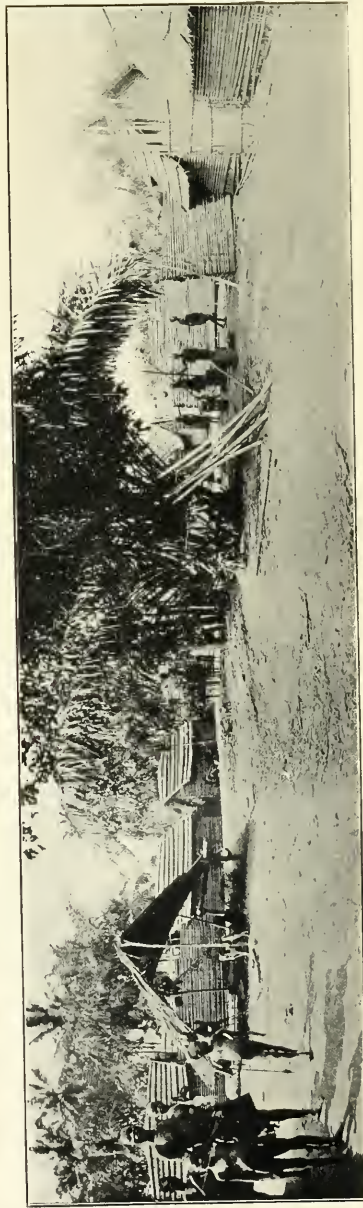
whole of that night the Bashilele held a dance of triumph, yelling and singing at the top of their voices, and a couple of hours after sunrise on the following morning this dance was still in progress, although many of the dancers could hardly lift their feet and were streaming with perspiration. Several of our acquaintances in the village completely lost their voices for some days as a result of their singing in celebration of the bloodless victory. And so the incident ended satisfactorily for all concerned—the Badjok had had a very lucky escape; the Bashilele had been prevented from bringing down upon themselves an invasion in such force as would certainly have overwhelmed them had they murdered this small party of Badjok; and we had been able to witness a real war scare among the Bashilele, and to observe how courteous these primitive people are to guests for whom they have conceived a liking. At the first alarm all the male members of the population of over six or seven years old had taken arms, quite small children of about eight being as eager for battle as the grown-up warriors; the women, except for a few who came out to kill the wounded, had all remained behind the stockade, and in their hurried flight from the plantations had hastily concealed in the bush their hoes, baskets, and other belongings which might hinder them in their retreat. As usual our own men behaved with exemplary coolness, and took neither one side nor the other in the dispute when any interference on their part might easily have caused the Bashilele to turn their attentions from the Badjok to ourselves. We had been very much impressed by the coolness of the Badjok during the incident related above, but we

were scarcely prepared for the display of audacity which a few of them gave us next morning by calmly turning up at the village of Makasu merely, as they expressed it, to wish us good-day. They absolutely disregarded the presence of the Bashilele, and the latter took no notice of them.

After leaving the second village of Makasu, which we did a few days after the incident alluded to above, no event of any importance occurred during our passage to the Kasai. Up to Makasu we had been able to find very few natives who had ever been so far eastwards as the Black River (as the Bashilele term the Kasai), but now that we were about half-way from the Loange we came across quite a number of people who had been there, and we began to hear of the whereabouts of the Kasai Company's factories, one of which we hoped to reach when we got to the river bank. As is often the case in the Congo, these factories possessed one name by which the white men and their employees call them, and a totally different one by which they are known to the local natives. It was very difficult, therefore, to ascertain which post it would be best for us to make for of the three which existed. We eventually decided to try to reach Bena Luidi, which lies upon the left bank of the Kasai at its confluence with the Lulua. From Makasu we proceeded to a village named Kitambi, where we met with the same friendly reception that had been accorded us at both the Bashilele villages in which we had stayed. We were particularly struck with the gentlemanly bearing of all the Bashilele chiefs with whom we came in contact. They were just as dignified as their kinsmen the



OUR PORTERS FROM THE KWILLI.



INTERIOR OF A BASHILELE VILLAGE.





Bushongo, but they appeared to be more manly and lack the *blasé* swaggering manner of such men as Isambula N'Genga, the chief of Misumba. The old chief of Kitambi showed us every possible consideration. One evening Torday and I had been out to shoot some guinea-fowl, and upon returning to the village we were met by the chief, who inquired if we had heard any shouting in the village during our absence, and said that he would like to assure us that the disturbances which had arisen were entirely between his own subjects, and did not in any way concern our men. He told us this that we might not imagine that our people had disobeyed our instructions to behave peacefully in the village, and also that we, his guests, should not be in any way put out by the trouble, which was of a purely domestic nature (in fact, divorce proceedings of a somewhat stormy character).

We spent several days in Kitambi, and by dint of dosing the natives for various minor complaints we contrived to make ourselves so popular that they were quite unwilling to let us proceed upon our way, and it was not until Torday had resorted to the device of playing upon the feelings of the women, saying that he was most anxious to reach his home in order to see his family, from whom he had been separated for many years, that we were able to persuade the people to carry our loads, and thus permit us to depart from their midst. Just before leaving Kitambi a small party of Badjok appeared in the village, having been sent to visit us by their chief, who lived some two days' journey to the south, to request us to stay in his village, and to say that if we decided to pass that way his people would convey

our loads to the Kasai. We therefore started off to the village of this chief Mayila, passing one night in a Bashilele hamlet on the way. Upon arriving at Mayila's village we discovered that it was more or less of a temporary one, being the most northerly settlement of the Badjok, who have in considerable numbers moved out of Angola into Congo territory, in order to collect rubber in districts like the Bashilele country, where the local natives do not trade in that commodity, and hunt elephants and sell the ivory and rubber thus obtained to the neighbouring factories of the Kasai Company. Having spent a few years in thus amassing a fortune, the Badjok return to Angola where spirituous liquors are permitted to be sold to the natives, and waste their substance in riotous living. So keen are these people to trade with the white man that I do not believe they possess one single article which they would not sell, but the prices they demand are so extremely high that during our stay with them we were not able to make very extensive purchases for the Museum. As an instance of their enthusiasm to trade, I may mention that one of these people suggested to us in all seriousness that he should accompany us to Europe, bringing with him his rubber and ivory, and thus save the middleman's profit, which he was astute enough to know must be made by the trading companies in Africa. The Badjok are a truly remarkable people. Undersized and dirty, there is nothing picturesque about them, but being born warriors and possessing absolutely no sense of fear, they have in the past migrated from the south, conquering tribe after tribe with which they came in contact; in fact, only one race of the south-western

Congo, the Babunda, has fairly defeated them on the field of battle. Nowadays the presence of European authority had stemmed the tide of the Badjok invasion, and although these people, had they decided to take up arms against the white man, could have rendered the occupation of the upper Kasai extremely difficult, their enthusiasm for trade has led them to realise that fortunes were to be made in commerce with the white man, and they accordingly became his friends. They are the only tribe with whom we came into contact who habitually hunt elephants for their ivory. Their method for doing so is as follows: Armed with flintlock guns (it is curious that although they are wealthy the Badjok prefer to use the cheapest variety of "gaspipes" that is sold in the Kasai), a party of half-a-dozen hunters proceed to the various swamps in search of elephants. Upon finding an animal carrying a good pair of tusks, two of the Badjok fire together at his head, usually bringing him to his knees. These two then run away and hastily reload their guns, while two more shoot simultaneously at the animal's head and also retire to reload, leaving the remaining two to take their shots and then run away. By the time the third pair of Badjok have discharged their guns the first pair have reloaded and are ready to shoot again, and in this way a continuous fusillade is kept up until the unfortunate elephant is dead. Although the Badjok were very friendly to us, our stay in their village was not particularly comfortable. We were neither of us in very good health, Torday having suffered from toothache for some weeks, and I having broken a bone in my hand some months before at the Mushenge, which I had never

been able to have set, and which was a constant cause of worry to me. We were therefore in need of as much rest as the conditions of our life would allow, but in the Badjok village sleep was almost out of the question, for all through the night the people would keep up an animated conversation at the top of their voices, each one remaining in his house and shouting to his friends at the other side of the village. Dances, too, with their inevitable accompaniment of tom-toms, were very frequently held, and always appeared to take place as near as possible to our tents just as we were hoping to get to sleep. Old Mayila, their chief, must have been nearly eighty years of age; in his younger days he had travelled (possibly as a slave raider) very extensively, and knew practically the whole of the country between Lake Tanganyika and St. Paul de Loanda on the west coast. Torday was able to check his veracity when he told us this, for he himself knows the country about Tanganyika, and also round the Portuguese frontier by the upper waters of the Kwilu, and he told me that the old chief knew the name of every stream and village which he mentioned to him. The old man was quite an amusing character. He induced his warriors to hold a dance in our honour, in the course of which a good deal of powder was squibbed off from the old flintlock guns, and at the conclusion of the dance Torday produced a present of gunpowder and requested the chief to distribute it among the performers. "I will keep it for them," replied the old fellow, hastily carrying it off to his hut, and, despite the angry protestations of those for whom the present was intended, not one of them got so much as a single load from those canisters. Old Mayila was ex-

tremely fond of liquid refreshment, and he would always contrive to be present when I took my daily drink of whisky before supper. He did not hesitate to ask for some, and at last grew so importunate that I was compelled to take my grog in the privacy of my tent, pretending that our supply was finished. Although Mayila had promised that his people should carry our loads to the Kasai, we soon discovered that he had in reality induced us to visit him in the hope of being able to sell us rubber, and when he found that we would not purchase any of that commodity he declined to use his influence to persuade his subjects to carry for us. No one was in the least anxious to act as a carrier, for the Badjok told us plainly that they could make a better profit by spending their time in collecting rubber and in hunting elephants than in accompanying us to the Kasai. Although this delayed us some days it did not seriously inconvenience us, for we persuaded a native to convey a letter to the white man's factory of Bena Luidi, and the Kasai Company's agent there sent his own workmen to bring on our loads to his post. Two very long days' marching sufficed to take us to the river after spending about two months in the unknown country.

Although the distance, as the crow flies, from the Loange to the Kasai is only about eighty miles, we were pleased at having performed a journey which we had been assured was quite impossible. By discovering that the country consists, for the most part, of grassy uplands and not of impenetrable forest, we had cleared up the doubts which had existed as to its nature; Torday had been able to confirm his theories as to the relationship between its inhabi-

tants and the Bushongo, thus adding very considerably to the value of his researches among the latter people, and we had shown that, with careful handling, the Bakongo and Bashilele are by no means so hostile to the white man as we had been led to believe. We were particularly pleased that, contrary to the predictions of Europeans, we had been able to carry out our project without employing an armed force and without having to fire a single shot in anger. It is true that we have never been able to see the great chief Goman Vula, but, as I have shown, the means at our disposal were not sufficient to enable us to bribe the Bakongo into leading us to his village. As an instance of how false reports gain credence in this part of Africa, I may mention that our safe arrival on the banks of the Kasai occasioned no little surprise among the traders and the captains of the steamers which plied upon that river, for a rumour had been circulated that the whole of our party had been massacred, and we ourselves had been eaten by the Bakongo!

I do not know how this story originated, especially as the Bakongo are not, and never have been, cannibals, but I imagine that the white men who considered that we were running a great risk in going into the unexplored country must, in the absence of news from us, have begun to fear that we had been murdered, and no doubt each time these fears were expressed something was added to them, and in this way what was considered a possibility rapidly grew into a fact. However it may have arisen, we found that the rumour had actually reached the coast, and furthermore, that a Belgian trader, on his way home to Europe, had informed

Messrs. Hatton and Cookson's agent at Boma that he should proceed to England to break the news of my death to my parents! It was fortunate that he did not do so, for I have no doubt that by the time he had reached my home he would have imagined that he himself had been an eye-witness of the massacre which he might have described, together with details of the cannibal feast which followed. With our arrival at Bena Luidi our wanderings in the Kasai came practically to an end, for we descended the river to Dima as soon as a steamer arrived on its way down stream from Luebo, and thence hastened on to the coast to catch a vessel which should bear us homeward after an absence of two years.

Although we had experienced some few hardships, and the climate of the forest has probably left its mark permanently upon our constitutions, we were not displeased with our work, for we had been able to amass a great number of objects for the British Museum, and we had tried our best to turn to good advantage the opportunities we had enjoyed of studying the primitive African negro before he has been materially changed by contact with the European—opportunities which, as the white man's influence spreads over the heart of the Dark Continent, must become rarer and more rare until the not far distant day arrives when the African native in his savage state exists no more.





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